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# A Son of Cain

JAMES A. MACKERETH

1st

To Will Rothermel Esq<sup>r</sup>

This modest token of  
Cordial Esteem

from James A. Mackerseth















TO MY MOTHER, AND TO ANY  
TRUE WOMAN

To you who are the power within the power,  
The heart within the heart, to you who bear  
Through this dim, careless world the flaming cross  
Lit at the wrongs of God, and bravely keep  
In honour the high name of Womanhood  
Or in the light where strength hath need of love,  
Or in the shadow where weakness droops to die ;  
To you, life-patient Mother, noble Wife,  
Childhood's Custodian, age's tender Nurse,  
High-Priestess of the Inmost Sanctuary,  
I dedicate this book with loyalty.



A SON OF CAIN



# A SON OF CAIN

BY

JAMES A. MACKERETH

AUTHOR OF "IN GRASMERE VALE, AND OTHER POEMS,"  
"THE CRY ON THE MOUNTAIN," AND  
"WHEN WE DREAMERS WAKE "

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## THE LION

I MET a Lion in the way :  
Heigho ! his eyes were wild !  
A bright magnificent beast of prey,  
    A dæmon's child.  
    He scowled, and scowled,  
    With bristling mane,  
    And growled, and growled  
    Like an angry pain.  
He stood aloof : I liked him well.  
    Heigho ! his ivories !  
His lips were curled, and his smile was fell ;  
His breath steamed hot as the hate of hell,  
    Hot from the heart of hell.  
    Ho, ho ! the Lion !  
    Such strength was his.  
He lashed his flanks with tawny tail,  
He beat the air as with a flail.  
    How his fangs shone !  
A ghoulisn hunger twitched his lips ;  
His ears were angry at the tips ;  
He crouched upon his tapering hips  
    The Lion !  
His lithe mass, rhythmic as a wave,  
    Sank rigid, to a passion wrought ;  
He seemed some splendid sin, a brave  
    Embodiment of treacherous thought ;

In threatening guise there, grand and grim,  
It was pure joy to look at him.  
I saw the fireballs of his eyes,  
Death in his glittering flame-green eyes,  
In menacing thews and thighs.  
I had nor lance, nor any spear,  
    But a palm twig ;  
No doubt had I, nor any fear :  
I stepped the gorgeous creature near  
    And plucked his wig :  
    Ha, ha ! the Lion,  
Surprised, his thunderous brows unknit ;  
    The snarl died on his dazzling jaw ;  
And, furtively, his beard he bit,  
    And fidgeted his paw :  
He smoothed his cross and crumpled nose,  
    And shuffled, shamed ; self-conscious thought ;  
Yapped ; yawned, and feigned to dose ;  
    And, yielding to the spell I wrought,  
    His shyness rose.  
I thrust my hand amongst his mane,  
    He winced, breathed hard with sick surmise ;  
I bound his will as with a chain ;  
    He blinked his rheumy eyes.  
Heigho ! the huge and ponderous beast,  
He did not hate me in the least ;  
    He purred, and purred,  
    And pawed the ground ;  
You never heard  
    A friendlier sound.



His vaunting gone,  
My hand he licked with rusty tongue,  
And 'tween my knees his muzzle hung :

Ha-ha-ha-ha ! the Lion —

His jowl I wrung !  
I tumbled the great tangled brute ;  
His smelling brightness spurned ; my foot  
I planted on his flabby mouth :  
Prone lay he like a beast in drouth.  
I left him fond and humbled there ;  
He whined — but I had far to fare.

The morrow-morn a man in arms  
Fate that way drew ;  
His life was sick with his soul's harms,  
And him the Lion slew.

## MAD MOLL

FAR and far to the wandering eye the spreading  
moorlands mounded lie ; and beyond the heathery  
waste you spy a gleam of the distant sea ;  
A woman is limned against the sky, hunched like a camel,  
lorn and high, over her gorgeous clouds go by, great  
lazy clouds trail idly by to Bythe and Benderby.  
With hair as coarse as a horse's tail,  
She dreamily leans on a lichened rail ;  
Thick at her feet the brambles trail,  
And the silent hours steal over her.  
She seems some dead god's prophetess :  
A sly gust plucks at a matted tress,  
An eye shows dark as a night moonless  
When the grim, low shadows crowd and press  
On the edges of pools in the wilderness ;  
And the wild shy things discover her,  
They have no fear of her wizened face  
That is dim with the dreams of a desert place.  
Her feet are bare to the morning dew ;  
A lark above sings drowned in blue ;  
Two sultry questers search the skies :  
She chuckles, and clapping her hands, she cries,  
" Little one, pretty one, tried and true,  
I had a lover when time was new,  
And I sang and sang for him just like you ! "

Alack ! Moll's laughter sadder lies  
Upon the heart than sighs.  
And yet her errant life is jolly :  
When moors are wet and melancholy,  
Intent upon some harmless folly,  
She squats beside a sombre holly ;  
    And when the dancing ditches  
Cry in the loud unpitying pour,  
And flame-lit woodlands roll and roar,  
Crooked Moll in spirit, old no more,  
    Is whirling with the witches !  
Ill-used by fate's unkindly weather,  
Strange lives and she have drawn together ;  
'Tis hard to say, so close the links,  
If it be Moll or Nature thinks.  
The birds, with moist and magic throats,  
Tell her her own bewildered thoughts,  
She trips to catch their crystal notes —  
As though they fell like silver groats  
    In streams of shining charity !  
She lives like some enchanted child,  
By fancies fondled and beguiled,  
To all illusions reconciled,  
    Unknowing life's disparity.  
Capricious sorrows past belief,  
    She links with pleasures 'yond annoy,  
And Ah ! the poignance of the grief,  
    The pathos of the joy.  
A light has flown from the broken brain,  
A heart feels back through the years in vain —

The thread is broken, snapped the chain ;  
The sunshine comes, and the wind, and the rain,  
But the light that is gone comes never again :  
But Moll in a hat of twisted ferns,  
By mild, wet meadows and moorland burns,  
Merrily follows an elfin band  
Through a misty and enchanted land

Till the light returns !

She sways and sighs with the sighing breeze,  
Her words come thick with mysteries,  
And she croons with the crooning trees.  
And over her head the clouds roll by, great bulging  
clouds ride down the sky, like galleons fair sail on,  
so high, across the moors to Benderby.

The hot noon fills a glimmering land ;  
The drowsy cattle blinking stand ;  
And the sibyl stretches a tawny hand  
And gathers a brook's green cresses ;  
She laughs at the sight of a face she knows ;  
A slow thought over her numb brain goes ;  
The tittering streamlet daleward flows  
And dabbles her tumbled tresses.  
Toward things forgotten and long since lain  
And locked in graves she feels in vain :  
Old woes slip past for which she grieved  
Like thoughts that vanish ere perceived.  
Over her darts the dragon-fly,  
And the winking bubbles dancing by  
Burst in light at her wave-cooled feet ;

The mint-smell, strong in the languid heat,  
Is heavy as dreams when memories meet.  
She lifts her mouth to the golden day,  
But the words go back that she means to say.  
And deep indrawn in the breast of the sky, like dreams  
in the brain when the day goes high ; faint clouds  
steal on to Benderby.

The splendour's gone : the high light dies.  
There's a star-point tipping the hamlet's spire.  
Now a weasel squeaks, and a mouse replies ;  
Through lacy larches the moon doth rise  
With a face like a dead desire.  
And mad old Moll of Benderby  
Creeps from a blasted white-thorn tree  
And sends to the stars "Halloo !"  
And laughs her sister the moon to see.  
The day is dead as a day can be,  
And darkling lives keep jubilee,  
So she shouts to the night, "Hee-hee ! hee-hee !"  
Shouts her lover, the owl, "Hoo-hoo !"  
In the gnarled grey boles of the pollard trees  
Moll spies but chubby jollities,  
At their feet in fern she sits at ease,  
As glad as a lonely child,  
And beats her hands to an old mad tune,  
Or seeks some whimpering fairy's shoon,  
Or talks to herself and the staring moon  
In words both wise and wild.  
The black bats tumble from place to place



In search of the crooked old woman's face :  
She speaks to them fondly and scolds by fits —  
For she knows them well as her long lost wits.  
In the depths of the dark a baby-wind

    Calls to her heart, and it hears and grieves,  
For old loves live in her clouded mind,

    And every sound in the world deceives :  
She listens for feet she ne'er shall find

    Among the moonlit leaves.

Now up she gets and forth she hies,  
The mad mirth glinting in her eyes,  
And tramps the highway mile by mile ;  
The wires twang over her all the while

    By down, and dene, and dingle ;

    And "Whisht!" she says, and "Whoop!" she cries;  
And cocks her finger at the skies ;  
Her laugh demoniac crackles shrill,  
And phantom hags in copse and hill  
Give back weird laughter with a will

    'Twixt Pommerton and Bingle !

A raven croaks in Crowden Crag,

    A jackdaw shouts a Christian name —

And mad Moll, plucking her fringe of rags,

    Bobs back with a sudden shame.

All, all about the rocky ground

Sad, eerie sounds go round and round,

But Moll has heard a farther sound,

    And shrinks as if from blame.

She peers as toward a dim-lit face

    Unknown to days that are ;

She hearkens in a cloudy place

A voice from very far :

'Tis gone. She starts at a quickened pace,

And whistles to a star !

A silken sigh moves over the corn ;

O'er the dreams of poppies, a lover forlorn,

A wind goes seeking the face of the morn,

Goes drearily, so eerily, like sorrow, wandering wearily,

and silence grieves among the leaves 'neath moonlit  
eaves in Benderby.

And now at last, 'neath a beechen sheen,

On a couch of a long dead summer's green

Moll lies her down with never a care ;

She needs nor friend, nor faith, nor prayer,

Unmindful she as the sinless air,

And the wheels of the world pass over her.

There are not any remember now

What love was hers, what loss, what vow,

What grief o'ertook her, or when, or how ;

The pearls of the midnight braid her brow,

And the mists and the stars do cover her.

And, mutely, deep in the moonlit sky the planets in

lustrous pride go by in infinite space so clear and high  
o'er the midnight moors and Benderby.

## THE COMET

(24th January, 1910)

RESPLENDENT wanderer over silence, Star  
Awesome and lone, that o'er the sunken bloom  
Of our terrestrial day burnest to sight,  
From vasty deeps arisen, and riding far  
To realms beyond all knowledge and all thought.  
Strange errant child of nature, trailing wide  
Thy luminous vesture through the trackless void,  
An hour on man's mean vision sojourning,  
And passing hence 'yond large Orion's ken,  
Into the stellar wilderness, and on,  
Speeding by dateless wastes and dawnless stars,  
To gaze on dreadful nebulae that groan,  
Pregnant with worlds, and smoulder in th' abyss.  
Bright pilgrim, journeying through the infinite !  
Brave courser of the deep and dangerous heavens,  
What quest is thine ? What large and eerie quest  
Amid the tangle of the punctual suns ?  
These have their tasks, and these their chiming courses  
Range and are glad ; but whither art thou bound,  
Amid the wheeling and laborious worlds,

Proud peril, flaunting far thy flame afield  
O'er the rich realm of Venus? Swooping orb,  
Art thou some fiery rebel passionate,  
With horrors armed, portentous, terrible,  
Burst from the bonds of law and downward hurled  
Through hissing dark to sempiternal chaos,  
Before the staring planetary host,  
In wild combustion to some dreadful doom?

Audacious thought. Set in the timeless void,  
Thou art beyond all questions, nameless one,  
Ah! 'yond the reach and vanity of dreams,  
Fleet migrant through these staid and steady heavens,  
Flouting disaster with a scorn of fire,  
Thou heedest not our wondering midget-cry.  
Swept in the eddy of untold desire,  
Thou art regardless of this flickering sphere  
Caught in a web of suns, where night and day  
Flutter like flies across eternity;  
Where men, like insects in the summer woods,  
Hum happily, and die. Weird voyager,  
Firing the fluctuant gloom, careering on  
Through depths and heights where these our homely stars,  
Fanned by the gusty eons, never have roamed,  
Thou art to time a startling visitant:  
Some herald haply bearing tidings strange,  
Or flaming vengeance spurring violently  
For some far, woe-invested citadel,  
Some fastness on the frontiers of the world,  
Lit by a score of mighty moons, but lorn,  
Made waste by warring powers. With upward look

We stand, and guess, and know not aught.    Thou art  
A wonder to the desert nomad's gaze.  
Swart awe proclaims thee deep in Africa,  
And Asia holds thee in her Orient eyes.  
Poised o'er the silent margent of the night,  
Thou art most strange to lone and wandering men  
That ply their business on the wakeful deep.  
August and eminent, thou art acclaimed  
In spicy isles through the wide Occident ;  
And, spectre-like, with tenuous train art seen  
From ice-bound swamps in dreary Labrador.  
On thee yon quiet moon, with sterile stare,  
Turns all the argent brightness of her death ;  
The steadfast constellations watch thy setting,  
And beckon o'er the immemorial years ;  
But thou art mute for ever.    Tremendous orb !  
Dire-breathed, and trailing streams of threatening fire,  
Thou whirlest by into the infinite gulfs,  
Scourging, and scourged, imperious, burning still,  
Bright as some angry angel flung from God,  
Down driven before the wings of destiny.



## TO ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE

(A BIRTHDAY GREETING, 1909)

SINGER — whose songs, like yon undazzled bird's,  
Transcend the glittering amplitude of words —  
    To you whose melodies move  
    With their own notes in love,  
    And charm with linkēd chime  
    As do, in some hushed angel, eventime  
    Bell-loving echoes 'mong cathedral towers  
    That to the murmuring hours  
    Repeat, with joy repeat,  
    Fond sounds for death too sweet.  
To you, above all homage seated high,  
    Now 'neath a vocal sky  
That toys with dubious shade and diffident shine,  
    While rapturous ichors, meeting  
    In spur and spine,  
    Tingle, and urge to birth  
The beauty of the wise and jocund earth,  
    I bring this April greeting.

Exalted 'yond the tide of temporal days —  
    Th' ignoble fuss and fretting,  
    Swift fame, and quick forgetting,  
You have not need, you have not need of praise :  
Yet while earth lifts her lay on lyre and lute,  
    And sap in rind and root  
Feels toward the coming glory, and the plains  
Brighten, and blithe buds burst in glinting lanes,  
    And hearts grow slow to hearken  
    To thoughts that darken,  
    For you, whose spirit vernal  
Sings in time's spacious morn a song eternal,  
    From my too-fleeting hour  
    I pluck this temporal flower.  
Swimmer in seas of song with sovran daring,  
On rhythmic waves triumphant borne, and bearing,  
'Twixt shadowy trough and sheen of simmering crest  
    With threat, with thunder,  
    With gusty exultations of wild wonder  
    The thrill and threnody  
    Of the enthralling sea,  
    The rush, the zest  
Of the spume-tossing sea-storm's boisterous jest !  
    O master of most mighty melody,  
Hot from the heart of hate, the core of scorning,  
Gracious as heaven, hale as a windy morning !  
    Till force shall die, and beauty cease to be,  
    Till man shrinks, cowed, from strife,  
You are a part of all things proud and free,  
    Lusty as love and life.

Seasons ride on : the sleeping comes, the waking,  
    Man crowns his mission, and his days disband ;  
Serene in soul through parting and forsaking,  
    Nerved from the sea, 'mid ebbing time you stand  
Brave as a cliff round which the billows breaking,  
    Crash on the ribs of your Northumberland !

Lord of the wide and grandly-rushing line  
    Flung from a zest divine,  
Tossed on the lyric lips of ecstasies  
Your songs, out-lasting fleet regalities,  
Shall laugh, shall leap, shall smite with tingling smart  
The bright blood of the brave and feeling heart  
    While Britons breast the brine.  
While spring in England wakes in weald and fen,  
    While rhythmic winds and mists scud English moors,  
While tender sea-tones hum in coomb and glen  
    An English fame is yours.  
Your praise is loud to-day on ocean floors ;  
    Tremendous lungs laugh for you, and acclaim  
With shattered thunders upon lone sea-shores,  
    While April sets her daffodils aflame,  
    Your proud sea-name.

#### AN AFTER-WORD

A sudden hush as at an ended story ;  
    A sudden shadow where a brightness shone ;  
Sense of deep tears ; pale gleams of broken glory ;  
    A gladness gone.

False sounds the song denied the heart to sing it ;  
Grave is the dingle when its stream is dry ;  
Melody fainteth lacking joy to wing it  
    Into the sky.

Tuneless the lyre lies when the strings are broken ;  
    Rifted the reed, the piper pipes in vain.  
Cold, at the heart these words, so warmly spoken,  
    Enter again.

I wrote a rhyme for him who ne'er shall read it ;  
    His song is ended, and the Poet sped.  
No song's so sweet that sullen Death shall heed it.  
    Tease not the dead.

Silence is best. Amid so many choices  
    I choose a thought that, like a lapsing wave,  
Lone 'mid the deep's innumerable voices  
    Sinks to its grave.

Others shall praise. Ah ! songs shall leap to hail him  
    In years that travail upward far from here ;  
Leave him his laurels : fame shall never fail him.  
    Bow to his bier.

Onward he hies : and we, with numbed emotion,  
    Strain toward the deep, struck chill with swift dismay.  
Now is the Sea-king to mingle with the ocean  
    Drifting away.

Notes on the winds come, dying echoes only,  
A fainting music like a sea-shell's sigh.  
Lonelier the earth is, and the sea more lonely  
Under the sky.

## ODE ON THE PASSING OF AUTUMN

**B**LITHE is the morning, chill, and clear,  
Laid soft on peace the heart can hear  
Music surpassing sweetest sound  
Alive in the luminous air around,  
Alive in the clean clouds that pass,  
And in the good green grass.

Enchantment opens wide her doors  
And floods the world with joy :  
There lies a shining gladness on the moors,  
And death can not destroy  
The splendour of the nobly-patient woods ;  
In pillaged solitudes  
The silence is not sad ; the rillet flows  
And makes its artless music faintly heard ;  
And if the boughs speak now no silken word  
To the feeling winds, though every wilding rose  
And thorn be bare, their's is but joy deferred,  
Their's darling recollections of a past  
Not overcast.

These woods have lovers leal that ne'er forget  
The mossy grave of the sweet violet :  
Here comes the moon, her silver radiance  
    Trailing o'er seas afar ;  
Sunsets like perils old in rare romance ;  
    And evening's earliest star ;  
Here dawn, with flushed feet wet with mountain dew,  
    Loiters with all her rosy retinue  
Where, in wan misty light, in filmy shrouds  
The pensive ghosts of hyacinthine crowds  
By leafless glade and lawn and elfin dells  
Steal faintly shaking all their phantom bells,  
And shrink when prosy morn with glimmerings gray  
Creeps o'er cold woods and hill-tops far away  
    Back to their dank death-cells.

There is no loneliness on all the earth  
    Save man's. We walk in blindness 'mong our friends  
    With hearts devoted to ignoble ends  
Through dreary days. O, we have fall'n from worth ;  
We breathe in fear ; nor from blithe beauty borrow  
Sustaining hope of loveliness to-morrow.  
Within the tiny isles of our sole sorrow  
    We dwell apart  
In sick pride from the universal heart,  
Yea are us aliens on the earth, forlorn,  
    Peevish, by brooding worn,  
While the hoar tempest blows his echoing horn,  
And tosses the brave crests of rocking trees,  
And whoops round shouting shores of bounding seas,

And plucks the breaker's plume, and whirls it high  
Against the wild lights of the riotous sky ;  
While roystering streams from whirring mountain steeps  
Rush rollicking rivers toward the bellowing deeps,  
And jocund echoes in the hollow lands  
Halloo, and the cracking welkin understands,

We sit apart ;

Nor have our souls rejoicings  
With these tremendous and triumphant voicings—  
These laughters, jestings gloriously hurled  
Against the walls and windows of the world.  
Deaf to the lusty Dionysian game,  
Powerless, impassive, without wisdom tame,  
Cold to the light that leads, the zest that saves,

We dwell apart,

Lonesome, and sad, and old, and blind of heart,  
Mere dead men without graves.

O we have lost the secret of our youth,

And are to gray thought vowed, and vague distress,  
And vain toil, and old lies ; from lusty truth  
We steal, like wraiths before the spangled day,  
Into dim forests and dark caves away ;  
Or, like sick men i' the blazing wilderness  
We hide our faces and are comfortless.

Care is too often with us : let us leave

This mortal canker of too-human life,

And cast off shadow, and refrain from grieving,  
And lose in vaster being this vain strife,  
And walk in mildness, glad at morn and eve,  
Removed from sad deceiving.



Joy, joy is at the healthy core of things.

Care is that slow disease

That follows follies and the lusts of kings ;

But to him cometh ease

Who walks this world like some strong, trustful son,

Too high for mean complaining,

Owning all things through love, his moments run

To melody, and his sweet hopes attaining

Their golden ends, though human powers be waning

Hope hath his heart till his good days be done.

Leap, lively heart, and spirit keen and blithe :

Mildly the mighty mower whets his scythe,

Wisely he works, and is at amity

With that deep harmony

Which is the brooklet's laugh in lonely woods,

Which is the child's glad cry,

The bird's song in the weary solitudes,

The loud wind speeding through the pathless sky,

Faint wavelets lispings where the day-star peers

Through reeds on lilyed meres,

Yea and the chants of poets when they rise

Above their kind's neglect to kindlier skies.

There is a rapture on the lonely mountains

Where foot comes not nor human voice is heard,

Whose spirit flashes in the plunging fountains,

Exults o'er peril with the screaming bird.

'Mid pensive ruins of time-mouldered towers

Where large with reminiscence sits the moon

Joy, in the soft and owlet-haunted hours,  
Doth croon.

In graves forgotten of song and given to glooms  
Is glimpsed her radiant face ;  
And in dim paths autumnal among tombs  
She hath a biding-place.  
And futile man, the prey of faithless fear,  
The sport of chance control,  
May lose his cloudy care awhile and hear  
The joy-bird in his soul.

O let us find the heart a dwelling-place,  
And put off vanity, be free of guile,  
And leave the dusty whirl, the futile chase,  
And gather wisdom in the spacious smile  
Of moor and sky ; on mountains large and lone  
Gather great joy, and catch the undertone  
Of mighty being striving ceaselessly,  
Th' eternal movings round this transiency  
Of human life, and hear the great deeps roll  
That bore us hither, and bear hence at last  
When our swift days are past  
Our spirits to mingle with the boundless soul.

This beauteous world doth still companion us  
With watching sympathy and buoyant being,  
Serves mutely in sweet ways felicitous  
Deeper than human seeing.

We are not left forlorn  
Winter or summer, or at night or morn.

How very near and intimate is noon,  
    Pulsed with the lark's wild tune,  
And murmurous with the stock-dove's tender croon ;  
How softly insinuating shy twilight,  
    Given to all timid things  
    And swallow's wings ;  
And dawn how dear to the fresh waking sight,  
    Dawn that like memory yields  
A consecration to familiar fields ;  
And then the friendliness of infinite night,  
Infinite stars in infinite heights that burn,  
That in the vast immeasurable yearn  
For ever star for star. O not forlorn  
Are worlds or mortals ; we are cinctured all  
    With love, assured against all death's downcasting,  
    We are made one with all things great and small,  
    Bound to the Everlasting.

    Here far from vanities,  
    From life's sad incompleteness,  
Swift prodigalities  
    Flung from the primal sweetness  
Flush the inflowing thought,  
    Till thought itself doth be  
A wave far inland brought  
    From that Immensity

Whose cleansing waters on time's shifting shore  
    Break in eternal music evermore.

Now comes the first forerunner of the wind  
    Across the moorland spaces ;  
Keen sportive gusts pipe shrilly close behind ;  
A jostling throng of forces follows fast ;  
The tree tops tremble, and to buoyant mind  
The wide land wakes and lifts a myriad faces.

    Now all the blustering blast  
Swoops with a merry fury, tosses and heaves ;  
    Far whirl the dizzy leaves ;  
And with a wild commotion  
The woods grow hoary as a bristling sea,  
And creak and cry like ships in jeopardy,  
And roll in distance like an angry ocean.

    Caught in some wild elation,  
    In weird intoxication  
Bold earth and sky through all their flowing spaces  
Fling lissome limbs, and flout each others faces  
Like madcap things that reel in boisterous play,  
That rush together and laugh and speed away.

    Come strenuous agonist !

    Impetuous lover and antagonist,  
Hail ! consummate thy nuptials with the earth  
    Whereof the spring hath birth,  
    Spring of the daffodillies  
    And valley-lillies,  
Whose face a sweet surprise  
    Of April eyes.

Not squandered is the force by which we live,  
    That shapes the cosmic story,

That lends to lives that die the lights that give  
    The deathless gleam and glory.  
Therefore while beauty on the open leas  
    Flies rustling down the wind,  
While meadow-oaks grow bare by sure degrees,  
And the brave beeches drop their draperies,  
    To nature's terms resigned,  
    With no unseemly fretting  
    Or grieving, or regretting  
        For the gone prime,  
Let us take up the good of time's begetting,  
    Nor for a sun that's setting  
Weep blindly at the beauteous dawn of time ;  
But toward the resurrection of the dust  
Look with more lively and unstinted trust,  
Stand with more harmony of holy trust,  
    That man, no dazed repiner,  
    May show 'gainst time diviner,  
May strike no discord in the psalm that runs  
Through this bright labyrinth of singing suns,  
    Nor mar this holy ground,  
        His home around,  
This spot, this star with luminous vapours crowned,  
    And splendid with the praise  
        Of nights and days,  
Fair with all living and most lovesome things,  
    And bright with wings  
        Of souls that soar  
Toward light and joy, victorious evermore.

Blow, gallant gale ! shout, hollow ! and shrill, height !

Not vainly rings this summons to the land :

Forces there are that live and move in might

That hear and understand,

Yea, answer with reverberating power

Hour by sonorous hour.

Impetuous amorist, speed

By whizzing fell and mead !

The whistling woods fling thee their naked graces ;

With revelling hair and swift and perilous faces,

Like mænads wild careering over heaven,

The jocund clouds are driven ;

While tarns and meres in vales austere and gray

Clutch at thy flight with hoyden hands of spray,

Fly with thee, luminous one, adown the day

Whirling away.

Earth-treader, sky-born jester, streaming storm,

Time-grappling form

Tempestuous, speed !

Round walls of cities where old sorrows breed

Beat, beat and cry ! bid forth the captive races

Into the hale wide world of boundless spaces,

Shout to them *Freedom !* O in dim courts cry

Where hearts beat low, and brave men feebly die,

Cry to them ! cry

Of rolling woodlands, and of tumbling sky,

Of wild deeps booming on the bastioned shore,

Of raptures on lone mountains, of days that lie

In valleys deep, sweet-set in heaven's pure eye,

Where beauty dwells and joy is from of yore.

Ye ponderers on human transiency,  
Caught in the web of old perplexity,  
    O ye who bow the knee  
With broken wills to bitter destiny,  
Unto this swelling pæan of deathless powers  
Ringing reverberant through the topless towers  
Of heaven, come, hearken, awhile be free  
Of all the tangle and the mystery :  
    In these sublimer hours  
    Feel, feel the soul's dilation,  
    The heart's emancipation ;  
Feel the deep purport and the vast intent  
Behind this stress of thunderous argument —  
Wide rolling through the world from coast to coast  
Like the on-speeding of a mighty host,  
A winged host, that crieth as in war  
*Victory ! Victory !* echoing evermore.  
Within us, all about co-forces are  
That work and cease not ; yet but here and there  
Man feels his kinship with the clinging air,  
Rises exalted beyond bound and bar  
Knowing himself the brother of the star ;  
But while these gusty exultations move,  
    And moor, and mead, and wood  
In rapture and exuberance of great love •  
    Tingle, the affluent blood  
Leaps prescient and responsive, and we flow  
On infinite tides, made infinite we go  
Into the larger life, and vastly feel and know.







Spurring from Alps or Andes fiercely free,  
Speeding tumultuously o'er chasms blind,  
O'er champagnes sloping to the chainless sea;  
Leap where with foam-lashed flanks the mighty being  
Roars at all hours around the living land;  
Fly with the flashing spume exultant fleeing  
Like splintered sunlight from a blazing brand;  
Rejoice, fleet mind, and be at one with these;  
Hale heart, through wide creation rhythmic roam,  
Espousing ecstasies and agonies,  
Ever at home  
With man, with nature, and that fluctuant state  
That fashions human fate.  
So shalt thou ever be  
Of that serene and glorious company  
Who find in all things that do breathe and move  
Infinite revelations of deep love,  
Infinite hope for all the heart's desire,  
Infinite evidence of an infinite Power  
That holds the eon in the transient hour,  
That mid this starry choir  
Moves dominant upon the wheels of time  
From prime to pristine prime,  
Higher, my Soul, and higher.  
The world is given unto a happy clan.  
Clap thou thy hands, O Life, for thou hast heard  
The wizard music and the wonder-word  
Which at the dawn-time of creation ran

Tipping the stars with fire, the flowers with flame.

In high employ

Laugh, Spirit, leap and sing! uplift the name

Of Joy! Joy! Joy!

## THE MOCKER MOCKED : A TALE OF THE NORTHERN MOORS

THROUGH mullioned windows open to the night  
The violin had wailed along the snow,  
And tingled in the nerves of frosty woods :  
Then stillness. 'Mong the ghostly candle-flames,  
And in the hearth-glow faces, set with thought,  
Peered into vacancy, and followed far  
A dying music through the wilds of pain ;  
Until a sound, like the first stir of dawn  
In ancient trees, moved in the room, and then  
A rustling ran, then soon a lyric voice  
Cheeped like the earliest bird, "Now, Grandfather,  
Your turn." And he, a fervid, nervous man,  
Rubbed rheumy eyes, and coughed a sheep-like cough,  
Looked round half testily, and with lean hand  
Smoothed out a faded script, and coughed again ;  
And through the hush upon expectant ears  
In the cold starshine beat a muffled bell  
Tolling the passing of the kindly year.

With mellow voice and deep, that seemed to steal  
Out of the caverns of forgotten time,  
He read with power this story while anon  
Broke in with poignant throb the solemn knell.

By hushing copse and fields of inland peace,  
And where 'mong billowy bracken blazed the furze,  
And where the heather in one purple wave  
Rode darkly 'gainst the zenith luminous,  
He tumbled like a peevish wind that grieves,  
As vext in spirit as a tangled fly.  
And all his mind was troubled with a face.  
For She was lovely as some lisping wavelet  
That charms a silver secret from the stars,  
A thing all poising brightness, breathing joy,  
Waiting the mould of time ; but he perverse  
As any crinkled thorn upon the crag,  
Crude, angular, and rough with rigid will.  
And reason, harsh as a woman when she hates,  
With unconcern contemptuous dubbed him "Fool."  
Half woman and half child, all winsomeness,  
The bird-like captor of his fixed desire  
Tripped towards him as a hill-stream toward the moon ;  
For he was like a parent—at the heart  
Loved well in deep and fond tranquility ;  
Big-voiced and grimly kind, whene'er he came  
He was welcomed part with pity. He had been  
A lonely man, respected, scarce beloved ;  
Of stainless honour, he was feebly prone

To beam most brightly in good fortune's face ;  
To him all failure was the spawn of folly,  
A sin of will not soon to be forgiven.  
Clear-purposed in this vague and blustering world  
He had fixed his heart with power upon a prize,  
Had plucked it proudly with a strong man's zest.  
Triumphant still, he mocked at them that failed.  
At length, of self and fortune lord and king,  
With powers at prime, and pleased with wide esteem,  
He rested from his labours—satisfied ;  
And served out maxims to aspiring youths,  
And cheap advice to aged unfortunates.  
But sadness hurries to a taskless life,  
With timid anger a long-subjected heart  
Whispered of larger hopes and tenderer joys,  
Of the slow deaths of old felicities ;  
His days looked at him, and, surprised, he felt  
A sense of sad futility, a want  
Of that which tones and crowns a full man's life  
And makes his autumn fair. And in gray hours  
When in the haze of thought they lived alone  
His heart and he, lacking the central calm  
And anchorage, he found a void that ached.  
Like the aged conqueror of a little kingdom,  
His triumphs stale, and all his victories o'er,  
Who, crowned at the brow but brooding at the breast,  
O'erlooks his tiny realm and, tottering, feels  
The ambient forces of the universe,  
The rushing of the immeasurable mind,  
And all the breadth of being, and sits alone,

A dubious victor, waxing intimate  
With the long silence and the narrow house,—  
So sat this conqueror in his puny world.  
And the dumb future, gathering its cloud,  
Seemed cold without or wife or child to cheer  
His stern life wandering slowly toward the grave.  
Then would he ramble on to Rawden Hall,  
A mouldy mansion to the moss of time  
Given, and to guarding nature's green embrace  
And boughed seclusion, but of late, alas,  
Part from its dream torn, and fashioned to a farm,  
To pore there on the sweet face of a child—  
That kept his hardness gentle at the core.  
So through the years, most fondly through long years,  
And then at last in one swift moment dire  
The sinister forces round that single life  
Crowded and gripped, and left him not a man.  
The spring was come, and all the rookeries cawed ;  
The sun-flecked fields athwart the shining showers  
Shimmered, and all the happy vales were full  
Of hope that smiled ; along the morning moors  
Wind-laughters ran ; and in the world was love —  
Love the sweet singer and the light of life.  
The vernal year was toying with his heart ;  
The charming voices of his golden youth  
From sunny isles of memory called to him.  
So happy, happy was the mating-time.  
He leaned to kiss, as he had done before  
A thousand times, a thousand thoughtless times,  
The willing cheek, and something stirred within

Down in the live depths—deeper than he knew,  
A something grown to power, suspected not ;  
An unfamiliar tremor mastered him ;  
Before that tranquil face he felt afraid.  
He looked, with his grave soul he looked at her,  
And to his eyes her sudden beauty blazed,  
And poignantly, he saw she was a woman,  
There in the springtide in the happy land.  
And, with sharp, stumbling phrases on his tongue,  
And sick confusion in his dizzy heart,  
He turned to go, and turned again, and stood  
Trembling, grown angry for he knew not what.  
And from that hour he dared not kiss her more.  
Half that hard night he tossed beneath the moon,  
A shadow 'gainst the shadow of the moors,  
Perplexed beneath the cold, experienced stars.  
Th' accustomed path in a strange world was lost,  
And many crossways on his steps converging  
Led hither, thither to a land unknown ;  
And ways unwonted, therefore hated more,  
Enticed his cautious calculating feet ;  
A new life beckoned him who loved the old,  
And strange desires, impelling and repelled,  
Plucked at a wavering will ; and through the mists  
Of dim conflicting thoughts a woman's face  
Made his heart very hungry. Time went on :  
Love grew in him to something sweet and wild,  
Possessed his life, and sang a syren's song :  
He listened, yearning, sad and undeceived.  
In his weak hours he sought the quiet Hall,



Grudging his steps, and yet resistless drawn,  
A passive Samson to a burthen bound  
With all his might departed. Yet he strove  
With his fierce heart's antagonist, and seemed  
Harsher, remoter, colder than before,  
Cased in a steel reserve. And that blithe maid,  
With cruel kindness and beauty that was pain,  
Uncomprehending, drew him to his doom.  
Nigh wept he now for pity of himself,  
And now he laughed at his great love of her,  
A bitter laugh. His anger impotent,  
Fooled by a passion pitiless and vain,  
Strangled his peace, and he would rise and go  
Rudely, and leave the lone girl wondering.

The summer waned : but love waned not, but grew  
A monstrous thing, a paralysing power,  
That left him maimed, a spirit without hope,  
Heavy as grief, and mute as heaven. There came  
A wistful autumn evening, one grave hour  
When the mute poignance of this fading world  
In beauty all unutterable showed,  
When earth herself seemed bitter-beautiful  
As love that suffers. Stillness palpable  
Pressed on the land, like memory on a heart  
That feels the tragic transiency of joy,  
Anticipating tears. The dank air  
Was rich with mellow smells, the voiceless corn  
Lay sheaved in numerous fields, and the full moon  
Swung bare. The lover, desolate at heart,  
Leaned brooding in a lane beside the farm :



There was a din of laughter, and a voice —  
*Her's* in the shadow ; and two forms approached  
Along an aisle of leaves moon-garlanded,  
And stood ; *her's* and a youth's ; and all his heart  
Quivered and cried, and like a tortured thing  
Grew cruel ; and a hate made keen his eyes,  
And very keen his ears ; and, standing there  
In dusk and silence, cold, and pitiless,  
He saw the rash lad kiss the lass on the mouth,  
Saw her impetuous fingers lift in light,  
And heard their protest on a wounded cheek,  
And grinned with grinding teeth, and saw, alack,  
The mellow pity following on the pain,  
The tell-tale sorrow in a sad maid's eyes.  
And in himself he moaned. But they went on  
Into the silent movings of the night ;  
Down the steep lane he heard their chiming feet  
Stepping together toward a velvet peace.  
And faintly in the distance, grievingly,  
Her words, made tender, wished a soft Good-night.  
But he was like a sick beast in the wilds  
That suffers dumbly, waiting but to die.  
All through the laggard night he played with flame,  
Scorching himself ; and all the next day writhed  
In impotence fierce until the glittering Bear  
Sprawled lazily along the sapphire heaven  
Over the lonely farm, then went, worn-eyed,  
A grave man fall'n from pride, with grizzled hair,  
To beg his boon or bane. To her he told  
His inmost heart, stood pleading for himself

Tersely, with the sad persuasion of great love,  
A strong man made by passion piteous.  
She listened pale, unspeaking. Plain he read  
His answer in the terror of her look,  
And laughed — as one who laughs whose heart is dead.  
And, with a sad jest on his ashen lips,  
Reeled 'neath the stars ; and on a chimney-stack  
A starling, trained to toy with merriment,  
Chuckled and laughed ; and in the folding wood  
An echo like a gossip laughed and fled ;  
And night, an argus, peered into his pain.  
So fell this master-will who longtime stood  
Bluffing events with gusty confidence,  
Taking the strong man's tribute from his kind ;  
Deeply he fell, and, from his own esteem  
Fall'n utterly, he never looked again  
The hale world i' the face. A morbid shame  
Captured his days and poisoned every truth ;  
He read sly insults upon smiling lips,  
And friendly greetings were as jests that burned ;  
The very birds were laughing enemies  
And tittered at his scars ; and bitterly,  
In solitary gloom of joy's eclipse,  
He fled the wide heavens arrogant with sun,  
The modest meadows vocal with the songs  
Of the too-happy streams, and darkly stole  
By ways untrodden like a leprous thing,  
Hating that shameful moving sore — his life.  
But all his rage with zeal fanatical  
Turned on itself and struck his heart alone.

For her he had loved too well no wrath had he.  
So through the months, forgiving not himself,  
His barren breast, remembering, echoed, Fool !  
Thus stone he grew, and loved not any man,  
Nor God, nor time, nor nature, but despised  
Life and the gains of life, and built himself  
A lonely cottage on a desert moor  
Far from the habitations he had known,  
Beyond the human whispers of the wind ;  
And kept for friend a fangéd Cerberus,  
A tattered hag for servant, evil-eyed,  
Degraded with a curse ; and courted gloom  
Roaming through savage places, wildly lorn,  
Loving the deluge, the mad winds that wailed  
And whistled through fern and whin round tumbled cairns,  
The ebon thunder, and the glittering scourge  
Lashing the darkness of the mumbling moors ;  
And shrank to less and less in a narrowing world,  
And lived like some lost spirit in the wild.  
And few men saw him move. At last he died  
Unseen save by the curlew in its flight ;  
And unremembered in the waste he lay  
Where rarely came the mist-wreathed shepherd's foot,  
Where peaty waters oozed and all was sad,  
Craving a burial of the hollow skies.  
And near his head a rough stone rudely carved  
Was found, and on it : " Hard by lies a Fool."  
But someone raised a mound above his bones,  
And planted there a tender ivy plant  
To hide the cruel words upon the stone.

Now both are hidden. The heath's shrill voices pipe  
Over the spot ; the tempest moans and cries  
In winter time through all the matted waste ;  
Sunlight comes rarely, but the lashing rain  
Leaps, and the shadowy silences steal past  
The haunted hollow and forgotten grave.

While a last slow, reverberating throb  
Came from the mournful bell the old man ceased,  
Put down his faded manuscript, nor spoke  
At all. And like a mantle o'er the dead  
Thick silence lay, and a sad past was king.  
Then cheeped that gentle dawn-voice : " Grandfather,  
Is it quite true ? " And chirped another, while  
Her hand felt fondly toward a hand not seen,  
" It happened, O, so very long ago."  
And suddenly deep in the midnight dale  
Across the snowy stillness, round on round,  
Merrily, merrily clanged and clashed the bells !  
Crashed—cried wild welcome to the blithe New Year.

## NOTTINGHAM FAIR : A GOOSE-FLIGHT

A T Shipley mist, at Apperley mist, at Kirkstall grey  
Showed the mouldering Abbey through a sulphur  
mist 'gainst a scene to quell

A novice's heart for ever, for Holbeck lay

All black as the deeps of Avernus, and foul and fell ;  
And we drew our breath in the land of the curse and  
hurried away

While a sick sun wrestled in heaven with the fumes of  
hell.

Hunslet, Royston, Rotherham, Sheffield smouldered in  
gloom,

Grim, Tartarean, festering sores, and scarred and  
crammed

With shapes from the bowels of chaos, and wearing the  
bloom

Of hopeless Erebus, all like Erebus damned.

Through a land half-starved and sick with the fear of  
doom

We chased, till Chesterfield showed through a cleaner  
air

A glimpse of a twisted spire ; and we paused nowhere  
Till we came with a scream to the bridge that strides  
the Trent,  
And slackened, and steamed to haven, with fury spent,  
At Nottingham town : and by hap it was Nottingham  
Fair.

And Nottingham geese were all abroad,  
Ay, each fair goose with a gander ;  
And every Joe a jester strode,  
And every jade had a slander ;  
And all were as happy as happy could be  
Awaiting the rouse and the revelry.  
A hundred startled clocks stared forth  
To east and west, to south and north,  
All pointing, and dazed, and dumb ;  
Cheap-jack and showman and gay buffoon  
All waited the imminent stroke of noon —  
Each cocking a wistful thumb.  
A boom from the bosom of Peter's tower,  
Boom ! echoed from dome and steeple —  
A hundred trumpets blared with power,  
And straightway mad went the people !  
Gorgeous roundabouts bellowed and banged,  
Brassy instruments clattered and clanged,  
Curvetting steeds swept dizzily by,  
And air-boats swung in the windy sky,  
And Nottingham town was all a-blow,  
And Nottingham Fair a-glowing,  
And Nottingham fun was all a-flow,

And Nottingham cocks a-crowing,  
And lions roared in Nottingham Square,  
And apes made a raucous chatter,  
And gay cockatoos kept screaming there,  
“ Lord ! What in the world is the matter ? ”  
A gamin whooped, and a large ladee  
Flopt into a basket of roses,  
And a youngster pinked with a virulent pea  
The eminent nose of Moses,  
And sprites of merriment tripped on air,  
And shrilled from the flute and the fiddle ;  
And the tradesman clutched at the roots of his hair,  
And the banker swore as he counted with care,  
And a Bishop sighed as he muttered a prayer  
And finished it off in the middle !  
On every side was riotous sound,  
Red, rollicking folk went round and round,  
The lish and the lame — ’twas a motley crew !  
Grey grandams giggled like spinsters do,  
And took their trips to the blinking blue,  
And fluttered their skirts o’er the heads of the people,  
And madder and madder up they flew,  
All pointing their toes at a steeple !  
And staid stolid constables, waiving the law,  
All wriggled with mirth at the matter,  
And laughed with an asinine “ hee ” and “ haw ! ”  
Each mad as a master hatter !  
And the Mayor rode by with a wink in his eye,  
And his ribboned steeds were prancing ;  
On the Town Hall steps with petticoats high



The Aldermen's wives were dancing !  
Tight holding her sides at the fun of the scene  
On her pedestal laughed the marble Queen !  
And old Mother Grundy poring upon it  
Kept prudery down, and, neglecting to don it,  
Grew merry and tilted her bonnet !  
Ah, pity to tell it ! when we passed there  
The folk were all mad in Nottingham Square.

North we speed with a roar through the night 'neath the  
fiery beard

Of the straining titan ahead ; and we blink and drowse,  
And wake to the frenzied horrors that Dante feared,  
Where Sisyphus strives in vain and the fiends carouse,  
Where pain is parent of pain and the end is stern,  
Where sorrow sits facing sorrow and joy is far,  
Where unquenched fires at morn and at midnight burn,  
Where beauty's a dream forbidden whose home is a star ;  
A tragic city illumed with spurting flame,  
And paved as with molten fire, and domed with doom,  
Where frown grim terrible shapes without a name,  
Where dragon-mouths belch fire on wavering gloom ;  
'Fore furnaces hissing and hot as the throat of hell  
Swart gnome-like forms flit ever like restless flies —  
“ Is it woe's sad city ? ” we gasp, and one says, “ Well  
Not Tartarus quite but Sheffield, Tartarus lies  
A little more to the north.” On ever we fly,  
And dream at last, and rouse at a fiendish glare ! —  
Is it Lucifer taking the tickets ? Dazed, under the sky  
We stand while midnight booms through a ghostly square.



## PAN ALIVE

I TRAMPED with Pan along English highways,  
Pan, pipeless Pan,  
Wandering far from his ancient byways,  
Sylvan Pan.

“Son of Mercury, whence art faring ?  
Friend of Bacchus, whither bound ?”  
Keen his face with a sudden caring ;  
Thought moved dimly in depth profound.  
Back from his mind, no summons bearing,  
Dropped the names like a solemn sound.  
His hoofs were hidden in English leather,  
Vagrant-wise he was out-at-heel ;  
Stuck in his cap was a falcon’s feather ;  
His coat was dyed with the wild north weather,  
Tattered and torn by madcap weather  
In many a moorland reel !  
His hair, as thick as a hay-rick’s thatch,  
Shrouded and sheltered his pointed ears ; —  
Pan, the homeliest god of the batch  
That the spirit of man could keep or catch  
In the grand old human years !

We trod upon English soil together  
He and I. How the moments ran !  
Jowl by jowl in the magic weather  
We jostled along by whin and heather,  
By strange design,  
Through shadow and shine,  
We together  
As man with man.

Never a word of the bland days olden,  
Never a word of the days to be ;  
Richer the present gay and golden  
Than all the ages of time beholden  
Since sun went down over Arcady.  
Over our heads the bees went homing  
Heavy with pillage from orchards ripe ;  
Great trees crooned ; in the azure — doming  
A mellowing world — a soaring snipe  
Called at the zenith lost in splendour  
To a mate i' the marsh ; with flutings tender  
A bird whipped by with a bubbling throat  
And paused for praise in a sunbeam's reach ;  
Came the quavering bleat of a youngling goat,  
The plaint of a tide-thralled beach ;  
And a breeze stole in from the salty sea  
Searching the soul like memory.  
My mild companion stopped with a start,  
No live word did he say :  
The past like a cloud was over his heart,  
An ecstasy caught him and took him apart ;  
And the years were whirled away.

Again a god in his native dells

He piped at dawn to the pensive woods,  
And pleased the power whose presence dwells

In mighty solitudes ;

And called together the fleecy flocks,

Rosy-white on the rosy rocks ;

And saw the chase through open spaces

Gleam, and the laughing satyr-faces ;

Saw shapes wreathed with garlands snowy

Threading the lucent brakes and rills,

Heard " Evohe ! " wild " Evohe ! "

Blown about the golden hills —

The fantastic Dionysia loud and low, a storm of wills

Mirth-mad, tangled with the sunlight,

Tossing through the haunted hills ;

At his feet in pomp unfurled

All the wonder of all the world ;

And breathed in rapture, beloved of man,—

Pan — great Pan !

Yet I saw that he could not understand,

He had travelled far ; but his face was grand.

Afar from time, O far from me

He scented his own Ionian sea ;

Guarded the wattled folds again

Under the quiet moon ;

Piped to the shepherds out in the plain

Singing at noon ;

Yearned for a face as fair as even ;

Heard a voice through the valleys stray

Calling him, calling him, love-bereaven,

In Arcadia far away.  
Grapes in sun hung heavily,  
And a stealthy river purred,  
In the slim reeds, noiselessly,  
Syrinx stirred.

Somewhere the faint divinity  
Moved, but he spake no godlike word.  
The gods forget as the ages fly  
All that their votaries knew them by.  
Yet he yearned in his soul for his pipe, I know,  
But his mind was blank to his own soul's need,  
For it was thousands of years ago  
Since he played on a shepherd's reed.  
His spirit stole into time again  
With a winged shadow of ancient pain —  
Pan's, Pan's!

The insects hummed a monotonous strain  
In the summer trees, and into his brain  
The present rushed with a noise like rain,  
And, slowly smiling, he spake again,  
But the words were man's — man's!  
Till the white lamp swung in the azure portal  
We sat in converse, Pan and a mortal.  
And still I doubt if he quite believed,  
Though I vouched it truth that the sweet  
Muse told me,  
That he was a god of his gifts bereaved.  
His face's enchantment there did hold me,—  
The past did fold me, fold me!  
Yea for a moment fell from me

This mantle of mortality.  
A thing all spirit, I seemed to flow  
Into the spaces of long ago;  
To sit at the knees of Dryope  
While the moon leaned low over Arcady;  
I heard sweet Echo lift her tongue  
In solemn caves by cerulean seas,  
While forests, in nights' meridian hung,  
Rang with the rhapsodies  
Of a pipe that was lyrical prophesy  
Of the love of the land, of the laugh of the sea,  
Of the lips that should give to them melody  
In years far off. And it seemed to me  
I too 'neath the stars piped carelessly  
When Pan was young.  
Alack, it is ever life's long regret  
That mortals remember but gods forget.

We stepped from the white highway together  
Pan and I. How the moments flew!  
Into the world across the heather  
Under the falling dew.  
For he was bent on a stack of clover,  
And I was bound for a bed of down,  
He to sleep with the stars spread over,  
I to toss in the town.  
The gods sleep well 'mong the starry streamers;  
We are the sleepless, we are the dreamers,  
We with the thorny crown.

Never a word of brave days olden,

Never a word of days to be ;

Richer the present grandly golden

Than all the ages of time beholden.

And the sun, in fiery splendour folden,

Dropped over Arcady.

We said farewell in the wondrous weather,

And parted. Saffron and carmine grew.

Poised o'er a league of darkling heather,

Horned with the sunset, full in view,

Pan plucked his cap with the falcon's feather

And waved me a far adieu.

And the light went out of the wild, wide west ;

And a god and a mortal followed a quest

That lives till the world shall roll to rest,

The world that is old and new.

## THE GODS THAT PASS AND DIE NOT

THE gods arrive, they reign, they reign, and go ;  
They bide their transient day, and have their will,  
And then, far-summoned, from grove to misty hill  
They steal, like phantoms at the first cock-crow ;  
And with a mute and cloudy retinue,  
Like visions splendid to some dreamer's eye  
Moist with an ecstasy, full fair to view  
They stand a moment 'gainst a purpled sky,  
Pinnacled high,  
'Mid fleecy mists unrolled,  
Divinely aureoled,  
And toward the dim world turning whence they flee,  
They breathe a lingering Benedicite,  
And with a far, " Farewell," they wave adieu :  
Then, with outstretch'd hands on heights forlorn,  
Hailing th' adventurous morn,  
They pass to far employ  
Of beauty and of joy,  
Nor from His service swerve  
Whom gods and mortals serve.

They pass — but not to die,  
For in the gorgeous ritual of the sky,  
When grandiose suns in tombs of glory lie,  
Their earth-reverting faces haunt awhile  
    The wonder with a smile,  
    With lingering looks and tender,  
    Then fade into the splendour.  
    And earth lies chill and grey,  
    Lone with her buried day —  
Till 'neath the tender silvery-footed moon  
The winds in immemorial forests croon,  
Then on the argent mountain crests on high  
    And in dim dewy places,  
    In love with ancient forms and sacred faces,  
    'Mong shadows starred and tremulous,  
    With trailing raiment luminous  
        The olden gods go by :  
They pass beyond our faring  
    To where the Prince of powers  
Stands 'mid His world-lamps flaring  
    Among His palace towers,  
    With all His hopes and fears  
    Quick in a billion spheres.  
    They pass and do not die,  
But have their portion with all things to be ;  
    They are commingled with a vaster sky,  
Yea cloud-enthroned o'er some serener sea ;  
    These still the journeying spirit may descry  
Beautiful on the mountains through eternity.  
    They pass, but die not : these



Unto the heights are given :  
For all his deities  
Man's heart hath bled and striven ;  
    By agonies,  
    By ecstasies,  
We scale the peaks by stern and slow degrees,  
    And these our hearts employ  
    With beauty and with joy  
When else the soul, appalled, would shrink unshriven,  
And fail of hope, and fail of love, and fail of Heaven.  
    Ah, man's ascendant spirit,  
    Led where his gods shall lead,  
Shall fail not to inherit  
    Sufficient for his need ;  
    Amid tempestuous seethings  
    He shall have tranquil breathings ;  
Set fast in faith and sealed in constancy,  
    He shall have glimpses of celestial mornings,  
    And sacred tidings, and divine forewarnings ;  
Enrobed with truth, and wreathed with majesty,  
Have sight more subtle than all temporal seeing,  
    Joys from the hidden holy founts of being  
Through time upwelling everlastingly.

Still shall the gods arrive, and reign, and go ;  
    Still, still shall time repeat the wondering " Why ? "  
And still from out the silence come the slow,  
The vague, incomprehensible reply.  
New suns shall write new portents in the sky ;  
    And other Happy Isles shall burst to view

On wide horizons where no thought goes sailing ;  
And subtler questers probe the smiling blue,  
And clasp a gleam ; and other gods prevailing  
Shall fill the thrones of gods they never knew.

The gods depart, but thou, O Earth, art young,  
And constant to the Source of Now and Then ;  
To That which *was* and *is* thy psalm is sung,  
Mother of men,  
And all thy days are patient, and thy power  
Abideth though the beauteous gods depart,  
Mother, who still dost cherish at thy heart  
Thy child the thinker and the thoughtless flower.  
Mankind fails not ; winds laugh, and woodlands blow  
Still ; hope immortal fans abiding mirth ;  
Only the beckoning gods, far-summoned, go,  
And pass with poignant splendour from the earth.

## THE NORTH-COUNTRY CARRIER

HE was a genial presence ; his broad face,  
As rosy as a rich September moon  
That over woodlands rising lights the corn,  
Took on the hearty joy of things, and showed  
To the hale sun a brother optimist.  
The mirth a-twinkle in his azure eyes  
Leapt ere he smiled, and down his dimpled cheeks  
Tripped like a wind on water, while his lips,  
That played with laughter like two waves with light,  
Toyed with his wit ere, slyly, winsomely,  
It rippled into words. The inner man  
Showed in the outer candidly revealed ;  
His life was tuned to subtle harmonies,  
And day beholding straight proclaimed him true.  
No pallid prisoner under heaven was he,  
Windy with sighs and sickening for the stars ;  
Not vainly he on regal altitudes  
Had drawn the spacious air, and, lonely-poised,  
Had gazed on wide horizons ; wind and rain  
Clouds and the wholesome earth reproached not him ;

Close had he walked with Nature in the wilds,  
 And on sun-drenchèd wolds had sung to her,  
 And on lone heath-lands 'neath star-crowded skies  
 They had been intimate, and she had set  
 Her wizard charactery upon the man,  
 And taught him sweetness, and mild majesty,  
 And joy, and amplitude of simple good,  
 So that he moved with blessing well approved.  
 Him often shepherds on the heights had heard  
 Far in the hazy valleys when the wind  
 Swung favourably, and had proclaimed with joy  
 His coming ; ay, and many a mountain maid,  
 Aslant her rose-hung lattice peeping, heard  
 His song that sweetened morning, and at night  
 Leaned listening as he carolled 'neath the moon :

*Gip, Flossie,*

*Trip, Glossie,*

*Over the hills and away we go.*

*Life is duty,*

*Steadily, Beauty,*

*Time a melody — Heigh-ho !*

*Over the highway clacketty-clatter,*

*Now Peter, merrily, boy !*

*Into the night-time — what's the matter ?*

*Moon at the midnight — that's for joy !*

*Up the dale, up the dale, rumble-a-rumble,*

*Sending a song through the moonlit fells ;*

*A pheasant's whirr, and a fir-cone's tumble,*

*An owl's Hoo-hoo, and a crash of bells !*

*Gip, Glossie,  
Trip, Flossie,  
Into the wood and away we go !  
Life's a duty,  
Cheerily, Beauty !  
Time a melody — Heigh-ho !*

Till the song swooned upon the listener's ear,  
And seemed like water tumbling far away  
In azure haze high on the summer hills.  
But he sped on through many a climbing wood  
Of feathery larch, o'er rugged mountain roads,  
O'er gusty moors 'neath gorgeous evening clouds,  
And heard on uplands splashed with angry lights  
The heathcocks calling through the gathering storm,  
And dipped to peace at last in hollow vales  
Full of the moon, where stretched the reedy meres  
Sparkling with stars and holy to the night,  
And rattled up the staid and rambling street,  
Setting the birds aflutter 'neath the eaves,  
While all the hamlet cocked its ears : so came  
Beneath a bulging gloom of sycamores,  
Steaming, with clamour to the somnolent inn —  
Where, ere his weary beasts were cleanly stalled,  
With fummy lanthorns — dim as moons in mist,  
In soft, bat-haunted darkness wavering,  
Would limp old Grocer York, and Farmer Bates,  
And blind old Toby Green, all breathlessly,  
For soap, jam, cart-oil, cough-cure, herring barrels;  
Would come a score of clamourous entities  
With bass and treble to claim their goods, and take

Their scraps of news. And he, that wondrous man,  
 Who 'mong the whistling mountains wandered wide,  
 And talked familiarly of outmost dales  
 Beyond the bounds of knowledge, beamed on all,  
 Gave each his own, to joy an added zest,  
 And unto grief some hint of good to be.  
 And ere the meadow-daisy oped its eye,  
 And dawn enriched the desert asphodel  
 He had gone, like longed-for pleasure that is run,  
 And lived in fancy something more than man,  
 A being benign, a spirit, a mystery  
 Mixed with sunrise and sunset, wandering  
 'Tween wide horizons filled with moor and cloud,  
 By height and hollow lonely journeying,  
 Appearing and departing evermore.  
 And on the morrow in a distant vale  
 At some white nest of homesteads bravely poised,  
 Pine-shielded, on a mountain's iron hip,  
 His tell-tale bells, borne down the echoing hills,  
 Smote an attentive ear that by-and-bye  
 Caught up the Carrier's song :—

*Now Beauty,*  
*Do your duty,*  
*Up, and over, and blithely too ;*  
*Brightly, Glossie !*  
*Bravely, Flossie !—*  
*That is just how a man should do !*  
*Down, down, down with the blithe bells ringing ;*  
*Brother Peter, bright as a pin,*  
*After our labour, after our singing*

*Death, a good landlord, offers an inn.  
Down the dale, down-a-down clacketty-clatter,  
Ring-a-re-ring through the shining fells ;  
A hill-brook's Hail, and a pie's mock chatter,  
A stock-dove's coo, and a laugh of bells !*

*Gip, Glossie,  
Trip, Flossie,  
On winds we come, and on wings we go ;  
Life is duty,  
Peter and Beauty,  
Time a melody. — Heigh-ho !*

But he, whose passing was as sweet as wind  
From cottage-plots of stocks or gillyflowers,  
Is vanished from the valleys that he knew.  
His bells no more in green reverberant woods  
Sound, and the uplands hear no silver cry.  
Where many an ancient silence leapt in song  
To mate his natural music with base toot  
The aggressive motor, tearing violently,  
Whirls desolating dust that lingers, trailing  
Like an unlovely memory through the mind.  
And now in spots where rang the shepherd's voice,  
The woodman's bill, where peeping squirrels frisked,  
Or silence listened to the moving clouds,  
From tunnelled darkness, thundering into day,  
Threading the valley streams the screeching train.  
For from that city which afar is seen  
From Brendon Beacon glowing through the night,  
Hive of sick lives that, 'mid a blighted land,  
Wan-visaged mutely moil and grimly die,



There came a mighty man into the dales,  
Graceless in pomp, and loud in ignorance,  
All guilt within, and jingling gold without,  
And bought some thousand acres here and there,  
And preached the great evangel — Wealth and Speed !  
You know the rest — the gentle Judases  
And Jacobs of the world. . . . The Carrier's day  
Was doomed ; yet still, in village loyalty,  
Not few about the hillsides up and down,  
Touched with the gracious thought of elder time,  
Clung to old uses ; yet less and less came he,  
Though ever with brave face and carolling tongue,  
For best he loved to serve an honest need,  
Give worth for worth, pride-barred from charity.  
And so at length the blithely jingling bells  
Ceased ; and the Carrier, bravely grieving, looked  
On life, and saw his circle narrowing round,  
Found lean want stealing nearer day by day,  
And felt like one not needed in the world.  
And then at last on dreary Windle Moor,  
After a night of wildly-whirling snow  
And dizzy tempest, at his Beauty's feet  
They found him, his last joy — his favourite mare,  
Standing above him patient as a stone.  
Yet still he lives in many a humble heart  
Though changes chase each other through the dales.  
Where nature guards her own mute memories  
His face in genial places seems to gleam  
Sudden. And yonder where, through woods all frore,  
The train betrays its flight with wreathing breath,



While o'er the solemn mist-enchanted fields,  
Hushed in white frost, even's rosy cherubs ride,  
I seem to hear his chiming bells anew,  
His coming wheels. And when the night is down  
And the last engine's startling toot hath tossed  
About the rudely violated vale,  
And timid silence like a frightened maid  
In panting trouble bath fluttered through the fells —  
Then, when shy peace steals fondly home again,  
From the gray darkness of the dreaming wood  
Home to the heart, a memory winged with joy,  
Over the years, over the wandering years  
Comes the old Carrier's song :

*Gip, Glossie,*

*Trip, Flossie,*

*Over the hills, and away we go.*

*Life's but duty,*

*Bravely, Beauty !*

*Time a melody. — Heigh-ho !*

*Over the highway, clacketty-clatter,*

*Now, Peter, cheerily, boy !*

*Into the dark ? — why what's it matter ?*

*Moon at the midnight — that's for joy !*

*Daleward, hearty ones, jingle-a-jingle,*

*Ring-a-re-ring to the moonlit fells ;*

*Into the wood with hearts a-tingle, —*

*An owl's Hoo-hoo, and a laugh of bells !*

*Gip, Flossie,*

*Trip, Glossie,*

*Out of the wood on the wind we go ;  
Life is duty,  
Peter and Beauty,  
Time a melody — Heigh-ho !*

## RASPBERRY GATHERERS

**C**HUCK—*chuck*—*chuck* : with his eye on plunder  
The blackbird sulks in the fruit-bowed pear,  
While deep in the rasp groves, over and under,  
The swift hands dart at the crimson fare.  
Fingers are touching and eyes are merry,  
Sunshine over and shade below :  
Two red lips, and a crimson berry,  
And a brave, bronzed palm, and a face aglow !

*Chuck*—*chuck*—*chuck*, cries the cross old merle  
Catching the scent of the scarlet juice :  
And a bare-armed lad and a hooded girl  
Signal a moment's truce—  
A wary peep for a prying eye,  
And a whisk from a breeze as it flutters by,  
Now a glimpse of green,  
Now a glimpse of blue  
From the latticed screen  
Where the sun winks through,

And four bright cheeks draw close together,  
Touch in the wonderful golden weather,  
    Touch and press, where none should spy,  
    Under a fruit-hung faery sky !  
Touch and press, and part in a hurry —  
    Sunshine over, and shade below,  
Two lips, traced in the juice of the berry  
    On a cheek that's blushing plainly show !  
        “ *Ha ! ha ! ha !* ” and “ *Ho ! ho ! ho !* ”

    Hampers are filling,  
    And young hearts thrilling,  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, O !  
    There's laughing and jesting,  
    And kissing and resting,  
    All in the golden glow.  
    A monarch would treasure  
    A tithe of the pleasure  
    The raspberry gatherers know.

## DE PROFUNDIS

OUT of the depths, the travail-depths, we come,  
Wondering, and wistful, and imperial born ;  
Grave lords of life, amid a light world's scorn,  
Sovran we climb from sad ways wearisome.  
Dazed from the darkness, mute awhile, and numb,  
Fronting the splendour of th' auspicious morn,  
Pale heirs we stand of sires whose hearts were torn  
And tested by the throes of martyrdom.

Majestic we with time's imaginings,  
And mighty with the yearnings of the spheres ;  
Ten thousand ages whisper in our ears.  
Our season cometh : on ascendant wings  
We shall outsoar the tempests of blind years,  
And ride upon the tides of time like kings.

## THOUGHTS TOWARD THE INFINITE

THERE is no end, and no beginning, none.  
Wave with inwreathing wave th' eternal tide  
Flows on with interchange of gloom and gleam.  
We walk on worlds ; and in our fleeting breath  
Systems do perish, and no broken cry  
Disturbs earth's mighty titan as he moves.  
There is no end, and no beginning, none.  
Beings haply are there, robed with azure heavens,  
Whose steps are on the flaming discs of suns,  
Who peep at continents through microscopes,  
And play at ball with planets, lives whose pulses  
Beat at the passing of millenniums.  
That tower through time stupendous. Who can tell ?

Soar, lowly life, thy breath is destiny,  
And in thy look the fate of dynasties !  
Sing, dubious heart, thy sovran thoughts may soar  
And subject suns ! The course of worlds was set  
E'en by some pimple in a nebula ;  
And empires antedated were of old

On leaning lips and eyelids. All that is  
Is linked with all that was, and thoughts to-day  
Shall crystallize in kingdoms by-and-by.

There is nor vast nor small but symbols all  
That gleam athwart our twilight evermore  
Shaping the ultimate glory. All is great,  
But unto man, high-privileged, is given  
Those bounteous moments when the soul, in transport,  
A-tiptoe on the peak of vision stands,  
In joy unutterable, aflame with God!

Life is most noble in intentions ever ;  
And Truth is ever grander than we dream ;  
And Time, fair daughter of Eternity,  
In trailing raiment brodered deep with stars,  
Dispenses knowledge as men need it.

All

The ringing worlds do ride with rhapsodies  
Each in its orbit round its thronèd god.  
And all the gods with loyal fingers point  
Unto the central throne ; and all things speed  
With shining wheels on wide and devious ways  
Till one light flash to all the several orbs,  
Till to all borders strikes the central psalm,  
And heights and depths in perfect harmony  
Poising together, gyre on glorious gyre,  
Chime, and creation swings at rest — complete.

## THE FLIGHT OF THE BOLD HUNTERS

**I**N His park elysian the great Hunt-Master  
Paced at the meet with his eyes on the pack,  
Cheered now a sick hound, a fiercer, a faster  
Checked with a thunder-crack.

Up rode the Hunters with grand storm-faces,  
Out swept the Huntsman, great was he ;  
A blast of the horn, and the blue wide spaces  
Shook, and the hunt swung free.

Hounds gave tongue, and the steeds sprang forward ;  
Harkaway ! harkaway ! scent came keen :  
Merrily loud they swerved from norward  
Down through the deep serene.

. . . . .

A hunter ! a hunter ! — the swift Nor'-Easter !  
The sea is in a racket and the sails go by the board,  
Vales scream, forests roar ; terror is a feaster :  
Hark ! 'tis the bugle of the Lord !



See how the clouds come chasing from seaward,  
Lusty as for hunting in the great white morn ;  
Eager voices whistle past hurrying to leeward  
Following the hunting-horn.

A hunting ! a hunting ! the great depths waken ;  
Laughing the heavens leap ; heights shrill o'er ;  
With a rapture of speed is the swift heart taken,  
And hears in the swift wind's roar :

*Speed ! speed ! Truth was ever jester ;  
Follow ! follow ! deathless is joy.  
Man — he was meant to be a sportsman and quester :  
Follow ! seize and destroy !*

Wind, wind, buoyantly careering,  
Nimrod of ether with the streaming hair,  
Wanton and wayward, fleet and unfearing,  
Wise one, I'll follow thee — where ?

What reck's the soul ! it hears a loud hallooing,  
Cheers as of thousands in the heights unseen ;  
Far flies the proud game, winds and men pursuing :  
God, may the hunt be keen !

Huntsman, Huntsman, where bounds the quarry ?  
On what dizzy plateaux is the brave game found —  
Fleeter than levin, than a swift thought's glory  
Baffling the heart's best hound ?

Harkaway ! the hunt's up, the shrill years flying ;  
Loud the lyric mountains and the plains reply ;  
Tally ho ! tally ho ! we have done with dying,  
Coursers are neighing in the sky !

Mount we and speed, for the Soul was e'er a quester.  
Loudly the horn wind, Huntsman of the Lord ;  
Man was ever meant to be a sportsman and a jester,  
Pursuer of the wild adored.

Wind, wind, buoyant and careering,  
I can see a wonder fleeter than the light —  
Gleaming it flies — is vanished — reappearing  
It leaps like a joy to sight !

Finely, divinely, the heights chant o'er us ;  
Flashing 'mong the pinnacles the bright prey springs ;  
Faint from the deep comes the far hunt's chorus :  
On, in a hurricane of wings !

Speed ! speed, the flier and the chasers !  
Kingdoms behind us flutter with a hum ;  
Distance torn with the fury of the racers,  
Beats at the brain like a drum.

On, fierce Huntsman, racing a-racing !  
Space with a whistle flies — waves farewell ;  
Flash — and a glimpse as of forms grimacing  
On the ruinous roofs in hell.

Swooping merrily the game stars meet us,  
    Buzz at our ears, and dizzily they go ;  
Grand is the breed of the steed that shall beat us ;  
    Huntsman, on. Tally ho !

Bounding, resounding, the deeps dive under ;  
    Monstrous nebulae, fold in fold,  
Baying in the gulfs with a noise like thunder,  
    Plunge on a quest untold.

Sturdily, stormily, faster, faster !  
    Straining while the soul pants chafing at the pace :  
Somewhere — somewhere, the great jolly Master  
    Waits with a smile upon His face.

Speed, speed on our white immortal horses,  
    Whooping at the suns as we whizz upon the way ;  
Deep bay the brave hounds ; perilous the course is ;  
    Onward for ever and a day !

Ever up the wide way riding, a-riding,  
    Ever, for ever galloping along !  
Scaring the quarry in his far-off hiding  
    With this for a hunting-song :

*Speed, Soul, speed ! the Truth was ever jester.*  
    *If the game be captured, slay it with the sword !*  
*Man was ever meant to be a sportsman and a quester,*  
    *Swift as the wind of the Lord.*

. . . . .

The hunt grew fainter, for few could follow.

Down the fields of the infinite came no sound.

A bugle's blast in a far-off hollow

Died on the night's dim bound . . . .

A hush, tense, dumb as a swift disaster :

A game thing leapt from a pang of pain :

And high in His heaven the great Hunt-master

Welcomed His hunters home again.

## SAVONAROLA

LUST, laughter, splendour, torture, tyranny ;  
Virility extinct, and Virtue dead,  
And God forgot, and proud Guilt trumpeted,  
And Truth dethroned, and man no longer free,  
And harlots in the inmost sanctuary,  
And pandering prelates, fat with Borgian bread,  
And Princes by dishonour wooed and wed :  
These were thy woes, Renascent Italy.

And one alone who ate not of thy feast,  
By luxury and revel unenticed :  
One only 'gainst the Tyrant and the Beast,—  
One fervent heart, above all purchase priced !  
Princes and Pontiff 'gainst one simple Priest !  
All men for Dionysos : He for Christ !

## THE HIGHEST SERVICE

**T**O share the fate of Christ and Socrates ;  
To weep with Dante, and with Bruno die ;  
To meet no mercy under heaven ; to lie  
In night's ungentle bosom without ease ;  
To be the prey of mighty miseries,  
And, mocked of men, to lift a lonely cry  
That mingles with the weary winds that sigh,  
And with the moanings of the midnight seas —

This is to serve the Highest ! — 'Tis to bring  
Hope to the desert ; to face friendship's frown ;  
'Tis to be hated ; 'tis with tears to drown  
Felicity ; it is with faith to cling  
To the soul's dream, to clasp that cruel thing —  
The cross of Conscience—yea the martyr's Crown.

## THE PAINTER'S DREAM

(ITALIAN RENASCANCE)

I STOOD 'mid desolation ; ruin hoar  
Lay round—the sloughs and skeletons of time.  
Stillness, that clung like terror to the heart,  
Clutched at my breath. In that dread loneliness  
An ominous Presence mutely walked with me  
With eyes that probed the depths, and burned like flames.  
Through grievous twilight toward that face I peered,  
And my pale spirit with a ghostly cry  
Shrank from his recognition. All the caves  
And caverns of my being looked at me,—  
Leapt to that light from everlasting eyes.  
There were no shadows in me any more :  
Ashamed, I sought and found no hiding-place.  
The sounding plaudits of unthinking men  
Sought long, and long experienced, were to me  
As jests upon the ears of them that die.  
As one who through untold eternity  
In flight precipitate, for ever vain,

From his soul's anger speeds and dares not rest,  
I would have fled, fled — fled the woe within !  
Yet stood in terror rooted, while with pain  
The past came on me like a passion sweet  
And fair, O fair and sweet to agony !  
And innocence was there and all my joy.  
And unavailing grief was mine alone.  
In that large desolation, far from hope,  
I heard familiar voices in the winds  
Calling my childish feet across the years.  
Again deep in the mute and perfumed night  
From turrets muffled close in clambering vines  
And waiting for the stars, the dreamy bells  
Charmed evening fields, and o'er the billowy sleep  
Of undulating woodlands, trailing sheen,  
The hushed moon came, a comely visitant,  
And all the olives whitened on the hills.  
Loved faces, long forgotten, rose and smiled,  
Rushing to kiss remembrance ; and the sight  
Wrung me to tears ; and revealed I stood  
A horror to my deathless self, and all  
My deeds smelt hateful to me, so that I cried  
In bitter barrenness in that dim place,  
“ O hide me from the living and the dead,  
From all that was, and is, and is to be ;  
To merciful annihilation give  
This horror, that is I ! ” Then, tremblingly,  
Blanched, neath unuttered doom and desperate dole,  
I sought that stern, still face that shamed my own,  
With lips that shook I whispered, “ Who art thou



Whose eyes are judgments, on whose face lie writ  
Sad records and a bane? " Thus answered he,  
"Thy deeds are past. I am the great Undone,  
The memory of the abiding god,  
The mutilation of the Might-have-been,  
The Light, that lent a glory to the bone,  
That, from the domination of the blood  
Driven, wore, undimmed, undying majesty ;  
The Self that at thy hearthstone sat and sighed —  
Yea, stood aloof, an uninvited guest,  
Beside thy banquets hungering ; that Self,  
To thee more faithful than thy perjured will,  
That warned thee weeping. Though man may flee from  
good

From that dread thing Himself no man shall fly.  
Sorrowing and unestrangèd thou and I  
Shall haunt, unblest, these blasted, dismal shores,  
Curs'd from past time, and doomed to chase for ever  
The unsubstantial glory and the dream,  
Called by the virgin voices evermore  
Where life is loss, and voices all are vain.  
Come." And he led me to a looming tower  
Whereby we entered an accursèd place,  
A city piled on gloom and zoned with woe.  
And all my limbs as grass before the wind  
Bent to that will and followed whipped of fear.  
And loud behind us clanged th' eternal doors.  
Thin shapes with withered faces fluttered by  
And burthened the sick light with looks that moaned ;  
And bodiless spirits, gnawed with memories,

Passed like blown smoke, and with their shameful sins  
Fled into hollow glooms, and were not hidden.  
And sensual shapes, all passion and all pain,  
The scarred memorials of distempered men,  
Craving their dizzy transports, ceasing not,  
Pursued with questing hands, horrid and mute,  
Their mocking lusts, and clasped their empty hells.  
On drifting waves of darkness as we went  
Brake glories from my all-remembering soul,  
And faces, tender with beatitude,  
Against a blandishment of aureate dreams  
Smiled, as of old they smiled—these hungrily,  
With unattaining feet I followed, followed—  
Followed, by stern compulsion dizzily drawn,  
Through Hell's portentous hush, adown the vast  
Unfathomable void I followed, followed !  
They vanished from me. There was none to heed.  
Then awful thought, weightier than mountains, pressed  
My quelled soul, labouring in the live inane,  
Helpless, condemned, immortal, far from hope.  
Then moisture oozed from out my melting bones,  
And terror from me, surging into sound,  
Broke, and the shadows of that deathly place  
Shook with my wail of pain till wondering ghosts,  
Immured of old, and long since grown attuned  
To agony, turned from their fruitless quests  
With doomful eyes, and damned me. Then I saw  
Throned on the floating gloom inviolate,  
In wandering glory, dolorous, eminent,  
The Crucified, the undying dream, the Christ ;

And toward the glimmering whiteness where He wept  
There came a mist of faces drifting up  
The hollow dark, a choking multitude,  
Thousands on thousands, and, like a mournful wind  
In leafless wintry places mountainous  
Where nothing comes, passed, and that bitter peace  
Sighed ; and they vanished to a doom unknown ;  
And all the gulfs were even as mouths that moaned.  
Then crept some dire eclipse, and God was not,  
But grief alone. Yet while that vision faded  
From out the homeless limits of the deep,  
On faces weird that yearned, on parted lips,  
Whereon the sighs hung dead, there stole a breath  
Fresh as dream-joys to souls engulfed in sorrow,  
And stirred the shadowy hair of them that mourned :  
And hope, a memory, moved through hopeless hell.  
Then the dark waters of unmatched despair  
Rolled over me, and even th' immortal swooned  
A little while — till from that dreadful ooze  
Upborne, I woke, and found the dawn — in Rome\*. . . .  
Before me locked in vinous slumbers lay  
The palpitant playthings of lascivious hours  
Couched on the wine-stained floor : the dainty Tita,  
With tumbled hair and tangled drapery,  
Drooped, like a soiled flower, 'gainst the listless leaves  
That trailed down jocund Bacchus' mounded thigh,  
Her lips' vermillion, dabbled on cheek and throat,  
Dyeing the pearls I gave her. Gloria too ;  
Her bosom with its twin unclouded moons  
Enshrined the peaceful breath ; her sinuous arms

Coiled languidly, and every leaning limb's  
Persuasive line and curve showing perfectly.  
Then stood I forth alone—defiled, defiled !  
And bowed my head, and all the angel rose  
Within me, and I cried, O with my soul  
I cried to that which hears, “ Beauty is fair,  
And art is fair, and life and love both fair,  
But I am foul, and bathe a servile spirit  
In perfumed baths of sensuality.  
I will fulfil my manhood ; I will rise,  
I will o’ercome the past, the wrongèd years  
Shall wrong not me ; I will o’ertake my dream  
And mount on wings to Raphael and the rest,  
And hear the feet of them that pass in light,  
Yea with pure vision see the innermost  
Where beauty kisses God ! ” Then, dazed with tears,  
I stepped upon the balcony, and saw  
Against the vague campagna weird and wide,  
A soft flush fuse the bronze of Hadrian,  
And petalled glories stealing on column and wall,  
A blush on Tiber, and the dawn a flower  
Blown on the dome of Michaelangelo.

## TO A BEAUTIFUL DARK ROSE

BLOOM that in an English garden sets the thought  
aflame,

Symbol meet for love's fair glamour, for the gleam  
That allures man's life for ever toward a bourne he cannot name

In his dream.

I who wander bee-like 'mong the beauties of the world,  
Woored and wooer, with a pomp of dreams for dower,  
Find within thy folded fragrance wealth of faëry incurled,  
Solemn flower.

Bloom that in the vales of Shiraz Persian Saadi knew  
When leaned with heavy sweets the gorgeous hours  
In closes hushed where dreams, all drenched with rose-  
scents, rhythmic grew,  
Sweet as flowers.

Shadow-forms fantastic, misty hair and moonlit eyes

Float about thee, languorous odours that recall  
Mild remembrances of sorrows spent and sounds of tired  
sighs

Virginal.

Dim from worlds enchanted courtly knights and queenly  
dames

Hover round thee, ghostly presences that once  
Passed in amorous beauty dallying while the roses heard  
their names

In Provence.

One with poignant loveliness and sorrow's majesty

Lends thee, rose, to lips of him she may not kiss,  
Links thy name to pain for ever—unto Dante, Italy,  
Beatrice.

Thou might'st deck the tomb of rich romance, a love's  
whose flame

Burned, strange to peace, in bitter nunneries—  
Hers whose dust of old time bore that frail undying name  
Heloise.

Lovely flower, thou speak'st to me of griefs august and  
dead

That gloomed the brows of queens in beauty's prime,  
Of the poignance and the splendour that wreathed many  
a regal head

Bowed by time.

Peerless Helen, throned on woes, with wars incarnadined,  
Had worn thee on the sterile towers of Troy  
Gazing lone toward Lacedæmon, yearning down the  
homing wind,

Far from joy.

She whose pomp of beauty dimmed the moon's in Babylon  
Might have spared thee at her sultry bosom place,  
O flame in velvet darkness, when the triumph burning  
shone

On her face.

Yea and she who blazed against the gloom of Africa  
Flame-like, splendid,—zoned in her all graces were —  
When Rome grew wax before her face, and dazzled India  
Salaamed to her.

Passionate epitome of mute and patient earth,  
Pride ebullient from the world's unwearied core,  
Ruby soul of odorous silence, mystery is thy perfect birth  
Evermore.

Raptures from dead sunsets and from dawns that break  
not here,  
Wealth from noons that spilt long since their amber  
wine,  
Draughts of moonlight, and of starlight, and of darkness  
full of fear,

Rose, are thine.

Blushing evanescence of frail loveliness whose breath  
Is sweet as love's last kiss on lips and brow,  
Thy tender petals shrink as from the stealing touch of  
death

Even now.

Beauty moulders, mingles with the pathos of the past ;  
Love's and life's impassioned petals pale and pine,  
Crumble surely, and are scattered 'mid the dust of  
world's at last

Ev'n as thine.



## IN ABSENCE

I HAVE not seen thy face this weary while —  
This while so drear, so very drear and long :  
Yet hath my heart been nourished on thy smile,  
And on thy face my song  
Hath pored, and gathered there most pleasing thoughts  
And sweet love-notes.

I have not felt the kindness of thy hand,  
Nor in thy spirit's hush of gentleness  
Drawn blessing of the peace that maketh bland  
Shrill life's too-rude caress,  
And poureth balm on all the bosom bears  
Of common cares.

The days are lone, and very lone the nights,  
And very lone the heart when absence breeds  
Gray thoughts and dreary dreams of dead delights ;  
Abiding love man needs,  
Abiding light of love to bless and buoy  
His life with joy.

I have not heard thy voice this lonesome while :

I borrow sadness from the falling leaf :

Like mist-wreathed Autumn, weary for a smile,

I stand and gaze on Grief,

And hear the feet of Sorrow as she hies

Toward death's surprise.

## THE GOLDEN STAIR

### PART I.

**B**LITHE wind, what laughter brings thee from afar ?  
What fragrance sweet in dingle or in dale  
Makes swift thy wings, so light thy flying feet  
Tolling the hyacinth bells ? Aerial joy,  
I do not envy thee !  
Wild water, hurrying from the mountain clefts  
Where the clean clouds kiss and the dawn first comes,  
What sweetness summons thee, thou wandering song,  
To rush-fringed pools where hour by glassèd hour  
The patient heron pores ? to where by caves  
In loud-applauding coombs the regal sea  
Eternal thunder makes ? Sing, wave, and speed :  
I do not envy thee ! —  
For I have drunk of wonder rich as wine ;  
Love the supreme apocalypse is come —  
My Love is come ! and these familiar fields  
Are sanctified and fair for evermore.  
To live is wonderful ! O this rich world !

## PART II.

An angry sunset, that through rifted clouds  
Splintered on headlands hoar its shafts of fire,  
Hath called the carmine from a sullen sky  
And ta'en a fierce farewell, and all is gray.  
The sea is sunk in shadow, and the shore  
Is thronged with muffled motions murmurous.  
There is a menace in the sombre pines,  
A loneliness is sighing in the land;  
Mist-wraiths creep chilly, and in the garden ways  
Thin phantom voices pipe to phantom ears;  
And, proudly shrill, toward some on-coming storm  
The bird of elemental battle sings.  
Will he not come? The night holds all the east,  
And gathers to her bosom the dead west;  
A low rack swims, and the windy Pleiades  
Have veiled their social fires in central gloom:  
There is not one pale star for company.  
Only a lost wind, wandering from the moors,  
Mutters its grievance to the leafless boughs  
And dies un comforted. My husband, *mine*.

I grow to hate this big tyrannic world  
That strikes a steely hand 'twixt soul and soul,  
That claims on some pale pretext for itself  
The treasures of the heart of woman. O!  
Must women ever beat the void in vain  
And strive with ghosts? . . . This world hath cares enow,  
My husband, and they steal into the face,  
And dwell in shadow underneath the smile:

A niggard confidence doth widows make  
More oft than death, ah, far more oft than death.  
O, take all pleasant accidents away,  
All soft and kindly seemings put them by,  
I would not dream for ever ; life is large,  
And I who lived for beauty yearn for truth.  
Beyond these little hours felicitous  
Bid me to share th' adventurous years with thee ;  
With love to suffer is at worst to live  
Darkling at glimmering doors : to doubt is death.  
Men give us gold, ease, flatteries, kisses, we  
Women cry out for cares, for pangs to bear !  
Cry for our birthright in a climbing world  
And gain but smiles and pity ! So the abyss,  
Whose dreadful silence words can never bridge,  
Broadens between us and our dearest. O !  
We ne'er were meant in impotence to mourn,  
To long in vain, 'mid slow obsequious days,  
For proud wounds proudly won in ringing wars,  
Striving beside our loves. So frail we seem,  
So frail men deem us — we so strong to bear  
Those pains Promethean that renew the world !  
Tush ! — 'twas his footfall . . . Nay, the time is full  
Of ghosts — ghosts from dead summers, springtimes gone,  
Ghosts that do wear the faces of old vows,  
Of little tendernesses now forgot  
But once familiar, gentle ghosts that come  
From tenderer days, that, gazing poignantly,  
Disturb the calm dull flow of use and wont :  
Ghosts all. Press home the bolt : He will not come.

Heart, put thy hope away ; the hour is late,  
And there are voices in the wind to-night  
I dare not hear. So drop our dreams away,  
These little dreams built of a woman's love.  
Once more the strong world wins. He will not come.

### PART III.

Down, down into the dust, my dream, my king !  
The tower 'gainst which I chose to build my life,  
Thinking it stronger than the winds of the world,  
Wrecked — but a mouldering ruin, whereto I cling,  
Like ivy to a crumbling wall, and dwell  
Alone with thoughts—with thoughts—that come and build  
Like birds do build in fallen palaces —  
Ravens and owls — my thoughts — that croak of grief  
And cry at midnight to the wintry moon.  
To know is pain : to think is agony,  
For all the past comes rich about my heart  
And proud with all of promise. Time was sweet  
Once ; and the years like friends stood beckoning,—  
Ah, here doth lie the theme that poisons life :  
This living woe, that dead felicity —  
That stands for ever with its angel face  
And smiles and smiles. Oh, mother Memory,  
Thou torturest with kindness, all thy children  
Are beautiful and bitter to my soul,  
Mocking my days. I gave him all with joy,  
And stood beside him with a radiant trust,

Calling him "Husband" in the hush of Heaven.  
God, help thy frailties when their angels fall !  
What sacred gifts in him found sanctuary,  
What might was his to wrestle with the times —  
To wring concessions from the grudging years,  
And bear yet higher the banner of mankind !  
But he hath trodden the path that traitors tread,  
And lives in friendship with his own dishonour.  
Oh ! had he fallen, having nobly striven,  
I would have pressed sweet comfort to his wounds,  
Waxed in my pride of love continually —  
Have joyed to stand beside him 'gainst the world !  
But he hath turned his back upon the stars,  
And old delights he loves not any more.  
My face hath no more beauty for his eyes ;  
These lips make smiles toward lips that smile no more ;  
My kisses are as dead flowers to the wind.  
Oh, I am hungry for a life to love !  
For some pure face to kiss, for some frail hand  
To touch with soft and fingering tenderness  
This cold and empty breast before I die ;  
But mine are the ghostly children of fair dreams,  
That down the hours with sad, bereav'd eyes,  
Steal mutely : unto loss my heart is given,  
My home is 'neath the cypress among tombs,  
And all my steps are upon quiet graves.

## PART IV.

Too dear may grow my sorrow ; I fondle it  
Too tenderly against a desolate breast ;  
In lonely hours it clings unto my heart,  
And sucks its fill, and draws my nature dry,  
And I grow warped, and wither ere my time.

I seem as one long sick and pent in gloom  
Who hears a hand athwart the curtains move,  
And turns with aching eyes, and, wonderingly,  
Beholds through the open casement, dim with mist,  
Glimmer the first flush of the storied morn.

My dream is dreamed : and, this deep stupor past,  
To murmuring life I waken dizzily :  
The day shows unfamiliar to my eyes,  
And common things seem strange and far away,  
And more remote and alien shine the stars.

I am a woman still : and many weep  
In this wide world, and are forsaken of love,  
And lift imploring hands into the void ;  
And many dream fond dreams and wake too soon  
To life's harsh usages. I will go forth  
And lay a balm on brows that ache, and raise  
The cup of comfort to some sister's lips,  
Nor shrink from tainted touch, nor dire disease,  
Nor leave the sinner desolate : I have loved.  
I too in dreary vicinage of despair  
Have felt the vanity of lingering hope,  
And, through the initiation of sad loss,  
Have been made one of that gray company



That mutely question time, and through the gloom  
Peer toward a laggard dawn with eyes that mourn . . .  
If *he* wrong life should I not serve life more  
And make my service plead before the Highest?  
He loved me once: and if his needs were sins —  
Such crimson rages bath the intemperate blood —  
*She* had great Nature's virtue — she was fair.  
I touched him at his highest: sins too were mine,  
Mine too no doubt — some feminine defect,  
Some unfelt want that left love incomplete,  
Some gesture that disturbed the equipoise  
Of heart and heart and like a discord clashed,  
Some native manner, maybe, unrebuked,  
A tone that lived a liar to the thought, —  
Faults, such as suckled in a private mind  
Grow monstrous, and do violence to love  
And poison peace. We are but riddles all.

Ah this strange world — I loved it long ago!  
Still blow the merry winds about the moors,  
And in the woods are heard the prattling burns,  
And on the hills the shining mists sail by  
Leaving a shimmering silence where they pass.  
Life is not all a lie, nor all the past  
False, though a selfish grief affirmed it so.  
I will rise now, I will go forth alone  
And search for duties as some seek for gems,  
And make my sorrow servant to my soul  
And to the world. And for the rest, who knows,  
When I am proved in fortitude and grown old  
In good works and in wisdom, haply joy

Far off, somewhere, may touch me into smiles,  
And health return, and life be sweet again —  
I am so young — this sorrow slanders me :  
The hours go by, and night to morn gives place,  
Winter to summer, it may be grief to joy,  
For all delights touch time on sudden wings ;  
This patient earth, that waits no spring in vain,  
Turns toward the summer with a flush of flowers  
Though hearts be sad and tears eclipse the morn.  
Ah, beauty grows not weary under heaven,  
Nor ebbs the gladsome glory of the world :  
Young lovers wander still by field and shore,  
And kiss at sunset where the corn is grown ;  
And the birds build and sing, and rear their young,  
And are not sad. Somewhere, sometime, who knows,  
This love for one may grow to love for all,  
And joy, reborn from strange vicissitudes,  
Closing calm eyes may dream again her dream  
Where twilight's tender voices whisper, *Peace*.  
I will go forth, I will go now and serve.

## PART V.

Pit-shaft and furnace and a piléd storm  
Of ponderous vapour threatening half the world  
Sullenly rolling toward a hopeless west.  
Behold thy world, my heart ! take up thy work,

Lose thou thy darkness in this larger gloom,  
Lose thou thy loss within this larger need,  
Lose thou thyself and grow complete through all.  
The day declines ; this sad and smouldering city,  
Set in a blasted waste, gathers the night  
About her orgies red, her tragic night,  
Ere, harlot-like, she flaunts her shame to heaven  
And adds to darkness terror.  
Here 'mid these ruins of a realm once fair  
I'll root my life, and feed a healthier hope,  
And turn once more my soul's face to the stars,  
And live by deeds not dreams — that drift us down  
The cloudy slope to sad futility.

A drizzling rain falls in the sordid streets :  
Like some slow foul miasma the dank mist  
Creeps from the scummy river : here and there  
Shrill whistling steam pants hoar. The wavering light  
Fails, and a weird horizon, blotched with flame,  
Burns into sight, till the unsteady dark  
Riots in lurid anger where on high  
Some monstrous furnace, mid a ghastly glare  
Of hissing gas-jets, spurts its dragon-breath.  
All night the steaming engines shunt and scream,  
And speed flame-bearded on into the gloom ;  
And men delve deep in pits, or to and fro,  
Like tortured imps, leap 'mid the laughing fires,  
Flouting the fingering death ; and women pray,  
Or curse, or cheat with sleep the haggard hours :  
At dawn the caverned depths give up their dead  
Or living, and the day begins again.

There is no pampering here, no idle griefs  
That mildly melt in slow luxurious tears,  
But stolid woes that bite the lip and laugh,  
And ask not pity having known not love.  
Here sullen fate doth hold with iron hand  
The lives of men — yea, like yon thing of steel,  
Stupendous shape, that in blind passiveness  
Swings its wide arm about the doomful hours,  
Even so — cold, heedless, with blind purpose, here  
God seems. O, life, here lies thy work! O, heart,  
Dispel the lie of circumstance, and seek  
The numb, sick hearts of men and soften woe!  
Here are crushed souls, and sorrows long grown sere,  
And hearts growing deader daily, strange to joy;  
Here little children far from Nature's dream,  
And beauty, and the tenderness of love —  
Of love! O God! give me some sister's pain!  
Help me to walk these chosen ways with hope,  
Help me to service quickly ere I die,  
Lest I pass hence and wrong the world and Thee!  
Cold is the rain, and keen the winter wind  
Blows inland from the barren-breasted sea.  
Lead, Spirit, my random feet to them that weep,  
To them that have no solace under heaven  
Lead, Spirit, and spend me wholly, till at last  
I see Thy sunlight through the clouds of self,  
And reach through service to the life of all.

## PART VI.

A little rest, and then a longer rest  
Ere other labours set in other worlds.  
I grow familiar with felicity :  
There are strange powers at work within the world  
That men wot not of shaping all men's weal.  
I have seen the ways of old, and they are fair  
And gracious as when erst they felt the feet  
Of them I loved. How rich with memories  
This mild autumnal land ! There is no lie  
With Nature, at her breast she nourishes  
Our tenderest dreams, and when the heavy years  
Have tempered us, and sorrows made us kind,  
And service clean, to her embracing arms  
She takes once more her children, and returns  
With balm its fragrant treasures to the heart. . . .  
Open the casement ; let the moorland wind  
Flow round me. How ripe and peaceful is the land ;  
No wave is on the wheat ; the languid corn  
Waits for the reapers ; far the yellowing woods  
Dip to the sea, where down a lane of fire  
The setting sun hies west. The spreading plain,  
Rich with a hundred breathing homesteads, takes  
The tender touch of evening. Not a sound —  
Save when the plaintive peewit toppling dives  
Into the purple silence. Inward borne  
How sweet the fragrance of the resting earth,  
That with a trustful beauty wistfully  
Waits the soft coming of the tender night,

The old sweet night and the remembering stars.  
So once I waited — it seems so long ago! —  
Waited in amber sunsets for my love,  
And saw the sheen of evening aureole  
The pleading beauty of his leaning face —  
His who went from me with the beauteous years.  
I yearned for him in the large and lonely noons,  
And mid the sobs of cities walled with grief  
I called the ancient kindness to his face,  
Yea in the gentle twilight of my dreams  
His feet made silence music. Dust to dust.  
For *her* his body burned itself away ;  
Those fires are cold, the ashes wide are whirled  
By clean rough-handed winds through alien lands :  
His pain hath become a voice in the lonely sea,  
A sadness on some moonless shore ; and now  
His passion, with the tempest mingled, put  
To holier uses, serves this complex world  
In wisdom ; but thou — Spirit — art upgathered  
Into the thought of God where, from these shadows,  
That on the hillsides slowly lengthen now,  
My soul shall follow soon. . . .

Ah, there are many sorrows under heaven  
That serve for royal uses and that lead  
By divers ways our faint and timorous souls  
To sovereignty. We are life's pupils still  
Laughing or weeping. Joy is exquisite,  
And to the souls of mortals pain may be  
A privilege or curse e'en as we will,  
For we are mightier than our woes can be,

And must make Sorrow servant to the Heights,  
Nor lose one good for some far dream of good,  
Nor waste on phantoms what was meant for man,  
Clasping our dead illusions ; we are great  
Through what we strive for, and are noble proved  
By what we overcome. Ere passing hence,  
Havened from conflict and the storm of time  
Here in this tranquil valley, I can read  
My little page of life with thankfulness ;  
For I am come through pain to peace, am come  
To joy through service, and to fearless hope  
By mingling with the hearts of humankind.  
Here in the twilight while the homing rooks  
Caw in the elmwood, ere the pageant sky  
Forgets its passionate parting with the sun,  
I stand, and all I see is full of love,  
Full of strong love and prophecies of good.  
As one who on a mountain looking back  
Seeks not his path, nor thinks of all his toil,  
But gazes wide in wonder and in awe,  
So do I gaze upon this phase of time,  
While Death, the guide, points up to where on high  
Serener summits glimmer. . . . See, the night  
Thickens ; and me the wooing voices call. . . .  
Over the pine-tops yonder comes the moon,  
The harvest moon, and gladdens all the corn.  
Welcome the shadow, and the little sleep,  
The loftier plateau, and the larger morn,  
Labour, and love, and pain, and joy, and all  
That in the thronging and the untrodden years  
Waits life's renascent spirit — welcome all !



Till that great Light dawns on these twilight deeds,  
Till love through time strikes one clear note, and world  
To amorous world makes signal, "All is well."



## DAWN SONG

**H**ARK ! the dawn-song in the valley.  
O the race, the rest, the rally !  
Peeping eyes in every alley,  
Piping tongues in every tree !  
Come along, along, along !  
Join the wood's enraptured throng  
In the rush of melody.

Things of night are caveward creeping ;  
In and out the elves are peeping ;  
Timid lives come leaping, leaping,  
O'er the lichen, through the dew ;  
Come along, along, along !  
Foot it with a twinkling throng ;  
Bats hie bedward, owlets too.

Sober thoughts are setting gleeward ;  
Cottage smoke ascends to leeward ;  
And the wind is drifting seaward  
Down the broom bank, saffron-brave.

Dance along, along, along !  
While, a proud and solemn throng,  
Pines salaam the brightening wave.

Daybreak in the lonely valley.  
O the sweets in glade and alley !  
O the shy peep and the sally  
When the flags of dawn unfurled,  
Over marsh and moorland flying,  
Flush the hamlets valeward lying  
Where the barn-cock, shrilly crying,  
Scares the silence of the world !

On the wold's rim blandly staring  
Stands the sun ; and, blithe and daring,  
Puss through dewy meads is faring  
Chased by little mists of spray.  
Pheasants down the woodland riding,  
All the solemn shadows chiding,  
Take the gleam, and sail to hiding  
Where on crimson creeps the gray.

Through the valley, through the valley,  
Where the shy rills rest and rally,  
Where the mounting day doth dally  
With the snow-white scented thorn,  
Skip along, along, along !  
With a light and lively throng  
Welcoming the merry morn.

Kingcups, drowsy-eyed and lazy,  
Whisper to the waking daisy ;  
And the beetle, mailed and crazy,  
    Stumbles 'mong the hyacinth bells.  
Come along, along, along !  
Now the big bee's booming song  
    Murmuring dies in elfin dells.

Ah, the tiny forms in motion  
Round each dewdrop's gleaming ocean,—  
Fleeting lives, with every notion  
    Bounded by a floret's bell !  
Here are feasts that Ariel knows not,  
Realms where foot of fancy goes not,  
Histories that knowledge shows not,  
    And the tales that none may tell.

Baa of ewe, and lambkin's bleating,  
Blithe delight of streams at meeting,  
And the cuckoo's mellow greeting  
    Move like mystery through the mind.  
Come along, along, along !  
Up the shining stairs of song  
    Soaring larks leave earth behind.

Clouds across the moors are flying,  
Gulls about the cliffs are crying,  
And the tide is shoreward hieing  
    With a laughter in its roll ;

In many a dene and dingle now  
The soft sea-murmurs mingle now,  
And love and life, a-tingle now,  
Are kissing in the soul.

## JEHU IN THE CITY

THE cars clank past 'neath whizzing wires,  
With muddled murmurs throbs the air,  
Time's watchword shakes a crowd of spires  
That soar round Clarence Square.

There, when the chestnut's piled with bloom  
In middle June, and when, all frore,  
The traffic probes the clinging gloom  
With numb, fog-muffled roar,

Old Jehu toddles to and fro,  
Alert to fares and deaf to noise,  
In touch with themes of long ago  
When grandfathers were boys.

He seems some sprite of mischief fled  
From staid convention's livery,  
Some rosy son of silence fed  
On laughter secretly.

His heart is his companion boon ;  
He's sleek and knowing — like his mare,  
And cautious as the temperate moon  
That visits Clarence Square.

With sly and philosophic mien  
Life's aim he scans, nor scorns the end ;  
He gazes on the curious scene  
A critic, and a friend.

With shrug and shoulder-pointing thumb,  
Chin couched on chest, he cons awhile,  
And fast the witty fancies come  
And twinkle in his smile.

The civic magnate, stern and prim,  
With ponderous paunch, and seal, and chain ;  
The nightly beauty, lithe and trim,  
All smiles and painted pain ;

The dapper clerk, with dubious rings  
And pride-starved gizzard, past him go ;  
And he beneath the skin of things  
Peeps at the life below —

And tracks it with the thoughtful tread  
Of sage experience in the mind  
Mutely, then wags a tilted head,  
And whistles i' the wind.

Life startles him with no surprise ;  
 His heart hath pored on human fate,  
 And semblance melts before the eyes  
 Of one too wise to hate.

Dawnflush and noon-flame, eves that fling  
 Splendour through many a squalid place,  
 Waylay his madcap moods, and bring  
 A mildness to his face.

Time's jangled moments roister by  
 Beneath the sun ; and, tired at last,  
 Round Jehu 'neath a midnight sky  
 The purring hours go past.

Years touch with gravely genial change  
 This buttoned wit in mottled brown ;  
 Still his adventurous eye can range  
 The pavement up and down

Where the bedraggled lilacs lie  
 Soot-grimed, or where, in grim despair,  
 The red geraniums slowly die  
 In gloomy Clarence Square.

And still beside him, mutely wise,  
 His ancient nag, contented, peers  
 On time with mild, observant eyes  
 And humour-twitchèd ears.

Ah, Jehu's versed in mundane ways ;  
A deep old couple, Jess and he,—  
They seem to shape their common days  
To one philosophy :

In summer's shine, in winter's sleet  
Beneath a chestnut stand the pair  
Close to the kerb in Clarence Street  
That enters Clarence Square.



## THE SANCTUARY

A BLACKBIRD clinked a crystal note,  
Its tinkle from the copsewood came ;  
And, like a beatific thought,  
The sunset's mellow flame  
Lay on the happy fields, and brought  
A rapture without name.

The light that flushed the sombre moor,  
Stole to the pine-gloomed mountain-wall ;  
Like face of one whose faith is sure  
Earth smiled ; and fell on all  
A benediction 'mid that pure,  
Hushed ceremonial.

I heard the dreamy zephyrs' croon,  
And lisplings low in drowsy grass ;  
I faintly felt on shining shoon  
Feet as of angels pass,  
Soft as the footsteps of the moon  
On meres as smooth as glass.

Some miracle made rich the air ;  
 The breath in worship rose from me  
 Like incense stirred by some saint's prayer  
     In a still sanctuary ;  
 Some sacrament was offered there  
     With high solemnity.

All, all about me glory trailed,  
 The gleaming forms of things divine,  
 'Twas ecstasy that hardly failed  
     Of Heaven ; and there, supine,  
 In fearful bliss my spirit quailed,—  
     I felt God's face seek mine.

. . . . .

Time touched me with a touch half pain.  
 Pricking the twilight, poised afar  
 Over the city in the plain  
     One scintillating star  
 Watched ; and I heard the tidal main  
     Moan on the sullen bar.

The blackbird clinked ; with noisy throat  
 He shook the dusk in hurtling flight ;  
 The west along the sea remote  
     Bled, and the wound was bright ;  
 Lone o'er the darkling moor did float  
     One gleam of chrysolite.

## THE MOUNTAIN BURN

SMOOTHLY, softly over the stones  
Slides the burn  
Here in the wilds, where the thunder moans  
In August noons, where on pinnacled thrones  
The demons shriek in tempest-tones  
In the winter nights, and whirl their hands,  
And wail in these desolate mountain-lands.  
'Neath a gloom of pines, where the crags frown stern,  
Lorn, amid wastes of rushes and fern  
Glides the lyrical burn.  
Now in a well  
Like a tinkling bell  
It slips ;  
Now in a dim and a mossy dell  
Shy and fair as a naiad's cell  
It dips ;  
And now in a pool  
That is clear and cool  
It gleams and glistens ;

And the skies show fair  
As it lingers there  
And lies and listens,  
Like a mind that lies upon vacancy  
And mirrors the shapes of phantasy.  
The lingering notes that loiter near  
Are notes that only the heart can hear ;  
And dallying  
Like an amorous thing  
In love with the world is the mountain-spring.  
Over it deep in the dazzling sky  
The buzzard wheels with a plaintive scream ;  
And the blue-zoned, glancing dragon-fly  
Darts through its lucent dream.  
Hither, from valleys misty and dim,  
Steal ghosts of sounds through the haunted fells ;  
Round listening pinnacles grand and grim  
Murmur the hamlet bells.  
Loud in the peace is the pulse's beat ;  
From the brooding rock-brows darkly stern  
Comes a desolate voice, a quavering bleat,  
That dies 'mong the upland fern ;  
And solitude turns in her ancient seat  
And sighs to the desert burn.  
Now the hill-breeze breaks on its silver breast  
As it speeds to sport with a stately cloud  
Trailing its pride down the leisured west,  
And it wakes and warbles its thoughts aloud  
To the lone, grey mountain crest :

“ O, wide is the world, and fair is the quest,  
And wonder is wise, and delight is blest,  
And to wander is sweetest though sweet is rest.”  
Now out and down to the open brae

With a laugh 't doth leap,  
For voices are calling far away,

“ Burn, to thy deep ! ”—  
Chanting on some far resonant shore,—  
'Tis the ocean choir

At morn and at midnight heard evermore  
Calling the rivers through all the world.

Water to water, fire to fire,  
Like unto like through the cosmos swirled,  
Lower to lower, higher to higher,

Nothing can stay,  
For ever away ! Yet away !

And it bounds and exults with the world's desire  
The burn but born to-day.

A SON OF CAIN ;  
OR THE INITIATION OF JOHN EDEN.

JOHN EDEN I, by God's good will  
A man to mould and dree  
The common lot, to weep with ill,  
To laugh with jollity.  
Mine is a tale — mute down and dale  
Remember it. Let truth prevail.  
My tale I'll tell to thee.

The morn was brave, the merry May  
Was up and all abroad ;  
On foot, on wing, at poise, at play  
All light young lives that loved the day  
Their artless gladness showed.

On such a morn the youthful mind  
Unto itself doth be  
A blithe companion — overkind,  
A love, an ecstasy  
Attuned to pleasures blest, but blind  
To earth's humanity.

On such a morn I scoured alone  
    The land in such a mood ;  
My happy heart was all my own,  
    And down the honeyed blood  
Sent music, and delight was blown :  
    O life was very good !

For I had wealth, and buoyant health,  
    And lightsome days and free,  
Coy fantasies that came by stealth,  
    And mystic revelry,  
And raptures that could scarce express  
Themselves in thought, yet claimed no less  
    A single sovranity.

In yonder glade in yon green wood  
    The white-thorns stand in flower.  
Thus in my thoughtless years they stood  
    When very breath was power.  
In yon shy glade in yon green wood  
    In youth's swift, prideful hour

I met one with a dismal face  
    Who seemed to grope his way ;  
He brought a dolour to the place,  
    A darkness to the day ;  
About his feet the primrose pale  
    Saddened in Darton Vale.

I oft had passed the man before ;  
    He seemed a soul at strife,  
That sought not any human door,  
    A life alone in life,  
A homeless wanderer evermore,  
    Alone, alone in life.

I had seen him on the gloaming moors,  
    And in the tangled wild,  
In grieving spots where earth allures  
    Her lone and grieving child,  
Where time in stoic calm endures,  
    To life unreconciled.

I had seen him on the shaggy height  
    Against the sunset-bloom  
A moment poise, then dip from sight  
    Into the moorland gloom,  
Melt far into the mantling night  
    On rolling breadths of broom.

I had pitied him. May God forgive  
    The pity lightly given —  
That mocks the suffering brave that live,  
    Insults the saints in heaven.  
May God forgive, may God forgive  
    The life no pang hath riven !



How swiftly to the selfish heart  
Comes wrath when pleasure flees !  
This gray soul wandering apart  
Ruffled my splendid ease :  
I spoke like one with callous heart  
Who neither feels nor sees.

Said I, " It is a merry morn ;  
'Tis more than sin," I said,  
" To move where so much joy is born  
As though all joy were dead.  
You do annoy the face of joy,  
And soil the day ! " I said.

He turned to me his old sad eyes ;  
He spoke no human word ;  
He looked at me with sad, sad eyes ;  
They spake, though nought was heard.  
I shrank like one too late grown wise  
Who waits the torture-word.

He stretched to me his withered hand,  
It on my shoulder laid ;  
It scathed me like a burning brand ;  
I flinched. Yet there it stayed.  
He held me with a ghostly hand  
There in that oaken glade.

There stole a shadow on the sun  
And all the shine went out ;  
The pollards in that eerie spot  
Stood like dead men that dared not rot —  
That stared and stared and could not rot  
With that live hush about.

The air was like a thing of mind,  
Oppressive as a knell ;  
The air was like a thing of mind,  
By mute intentions fell  
Stirred inwardly, a power not blind  
Weaving a deathly spell.

No sound through all the tragic wood ;  
No leaf moved in its tree.  
With swift intelligence the blood  
Played through me eerily,  
And all my being understood  
That woe was come to me.

“ Speak, Greybeard, speak ! thy dark deep eyes  
They make my soul grow sore.”  
He looked at me like one that dies,  
Like one that loves and, dying, flies  
From love for evermore.

He loosed from me his haunting hand ;  
    He sate me on a stone.  
His face was neither grim nor bland,  
    It seemed a face in bone ;  
Indifferent as death it seemed.  
    We twain sat there alone.

“ O speak, thou hoary man,” I said ;  
    He started, gripped his beard ;  
His eyes stood staring in his head  
    As though he saw his weird ;  
Stone-like he stood as though his blood  
    Congealed before his weird.

“ Youth,” said he, “ well I know thy name.” . . .  
    (His eyes were like slow fires.)  
“ Tush,” said he, “ I will spare thee blame,  
    Yet thy light soul requires  
That thou should'st house with shame.  
Too high that human heart aspires  
    That soars 'yond sorrow's flame.

“ Youth, I was once the fool of joy.  
    My heart was put to school ;  
And I was forced to pain's employ,  
    Was whipped in folly's rule,  
And plucked from all delights that buoy  
    The senses of the fool.

"I sought from very far this place  
To gaze a little while  
In secret on a careless face,  
To watch a casual smile. . . .  
Earth had for me no biding place,  
And life no kindly smile." . . .

Methought, so still the sunless scene,  
I heard the may-snow fall.  
All pensive drooped the woodland green  
As for some funeral.  
"Speak, ghostly voice of ghostly years,  
Whose very tones are tears !"

He gazed about and overhead,  
He looked far off and near.  
"I knew a man," he slowly said,  
(My loud heart quaked to hear.)  
"I loved him well : but he is dead :  
He lived by Windal mere."

Death-silent all the tragic wood.  
No leaf stirred in its tree.  
Dread like a frost was in the blood,  
Some direful augury.  
Too well my being understood  
That woe was come to me.

“Speak, old and dreadful man ; be just ;  
Hast thou some wrong to rue ?  
Is there some dark deed ? broken trust ?  
And doth a dead man sue ?  
'Twas told me once my father died  
By Windal water's weary side.”

Beyond the reach of mortal sound,  
In realms untrodden of men,  
His spirit ranged some cloudy bound.  
The strong spell snapped. He stirred, and found  
This human world again.—

“I loved a woman long ago ;  
She had a perfect face,  
A peerless form ; there seemed to flow  
Great wonder from her grace ;  
Living she lent on earth below  
A charm to every place.

“As wise was she as sin is wise.  
Rich love makes radiant weather !  
She was a splendour, a surprise,—  
O, she and I together  
Out-laughed the laughing skies !

“ I loved her long and long ago.  
    Another loved her too ;  
And I was swift, and he was slow ;  
    And both began to woo ;  
And he was heat, and I was fire ;  
    And both alike did woo.

“ And he was rich, and I was poor,—  
    Two sons of one sweet mother ;  
We had played about our father’s door  
    As brother plays with brother.  
And one was rich, and one was poor,  
    But each one loved the other.

“ And heat was he, but I was fire.  
    O, she was grand to see !  
A wonder, swaying bound desire  
    In toils of witchery !  
Methought such faces in heaven’s choir  
    Shone through eternity.

“ Blind passion takes with sultry sighs  
    What light love never misses.  
Remorse, with ever-sleepless eyes,  
    May wait on poisoned kisses.  
God, curse the hand that holds the cup  
    For folly to drink up !

“ Wise, wise was she as sin is wise.  
    She poised our equal trust :  
To wealth she gave elusive lies,  
    So held the balance just.  
The rich man won her, flesh and eyes.  
    ’Tis long since she was dust.

“ They vanished. From beyond the sea  
    Came word they twain were wed.  
One took the couch of misery,  
    And one the marriage-bed.  
We had been brothers, I and he.  
    I wished him ten times dead.” . . .

Fear’s icy fingers plucked my hair,  
    My limbs were as dried straw ;  
I shook as though my bones were bare,  
    And at my breast did gnaw  
White terror that would ne’er be gone.  
    That fateful voice went on.

“ They came again. Her face was fair,  
    It tortured with its pride.  
To me her hideous core lay bare ;  
    More leman she than bride —  
A lovely temptress hell could spare  
    To turn men’s souls aside.

“ She offered me her splendid mouth.  
Dead ashes my desire.  
She sued me with her smiling mouth  
Like a thing that sues for hire.  
Within my heart was desert-drouth ;  
Within my hate was fire ! ” . . .

“ Hush ! cruel man,” aloud I cried,  
“ I cannot bear to hear ;  
I had a mother pure ; she died ;  
I’ve felt her angel near :  
When I was but a babe she died,  
Yet O ! I hold her dear.” . . .

“ I cursed her for her trickery wrought  
In hell and devil-crowned ;  
I tracked her foulsome, plotting thought  
From bound to bitter bound  
And cursed. *He* entered, and we fought—  
We fought with little sound. . . .

“ O’er Windal moor the day was sped.  
A fell-sheep ’gan to bleat.  
I saw that all the west was red ;  
Grey-still the village street.  
There was a tumult in my head ;  
A silence at my feet.



" I heard a fly beat on the pane.  
I saw a wreath of smoke  
Curl blue 'gainst evening cliffs, and gain  
The sky : no passion broke  
The calm of nature, that in pain  
Stared, stared and never spoke.

" O God, it was so very still.  
The very thought was heard  
Moving about the brain ; the will  
Bent numbed ; the cold blood stirred  
Like memory after death : so still.  
Loud in that vivid void of ill  
A playful kitten purred." . . .

Gloom closed about the lonely day.  
That pain-strung face forlorn  
Seemed gazing far and far away  
Where hope is never born :  
It seemed when that dread hush he broke  
'Twas his dead body spoke.

" The stars were bright in Windal mere,  
They winked at one another.  
O God ! the footsteps crowded near —  
' My mother ! O, my mother !'  
She knelt before me. It was clear  
That I had killed my brother." . . .

“ Hush, horror ! let thy tongue have peace —  
Nay, speak in whispers rather,—  
O, give my reeling brain release !  
Was that slain man my father ? ”  
He looked : two strange griefs were his eyes.  
“ My father ! O, my Father ! ”  
“ Not he ! not he ! ” his arms were wide,  
He leapt unto my side.

I shrank. He staggered to his stone  
Like one struck, dazed, dismayed ;  
He moaned. There moved a muffled moan  
About the awesome glade :  
The oaks gave forth a hollow tone,  
And shivered in the shade.

His fingers twitched in empty air ;  
He was a piteous sight.  
The sense of all his dull despair  
Unmans me like a fright.  
Dear God ! the pain Thy creatures bear  
At morn, and noon, and night !

His mouth moved, as when lips in sleep  
Stir and the voice is dumb —  
While thought in some chimeric deep  
Travails with suffering, numb.  
Then twilight through his brain did creep,  
And slow words 'gan to come.

“ They took me to a grated cell ;  
They brought me meat and drink.  
But I was in the depth of hell  
And doomed to think and think,  
To wait the deep, too-slow death-knell,  
And watch the midnight wink.

“ They led me out into the light.  
I saw the dreadful sun ;  
My heart 'gan bleeding in its sight.  
I saw men stare and run.  
There fell a haze. 'Twas crimson night ;  
I saw not anyone.

“ They plied me with a wordy stream :  
I spake as from a shroud.  
As through a mist, as in a dream  
I saw a visaged crowd :  
And, white and lone, — O dreadful dream ! —  
*Our* mother spoke aloud.

“ Alack ! not mine the murderer's pall.  
*My* deed they named it other.  
“ 'Tis murder ! Let the sentence fall ! ’  
I cried, ‘ Lo, are ye liars all ?  
See ! I have slain my mother ! ’

“ And scarce it was a week she died,  
    My virgin love, my dear.  
They two lie stilly side by side  
    By Windal’s eerie mere.  
The sunsets trail on the wild hill-side  
    But never come anear.” . . .  
He paused like one who ponders o’er  
    The world of Nevermore.

“ But what beyond ? Thy face is wan :  
    The woeful worst pursue :  
Regret is common in time’s plan,  
    And death is common too.”  
I heard — like one who hears in gloom  
    The stealthy step of doom :

“ I fled from Windal’s haunted mere  
    To hide on alien shores.  
I sought no friends, I lodged with fear,  
    And knocked at strangers’ doors.  
Night brought men rest : I bared my breast  
    To count the bleeding sores.

“ Sometimes a cloudy dream went past  
    And hid my scars from view ;  
But dawn came swift and forward cast  
    The thoughts I vainly flew.  
No life hath travelled ’yond its past,  
    No life shall ever do.”

“ But what of Her ? my heart is cold  
    This hovering terror quell ! ”  
“ She had great beauty ; she gat gold ;  
She scattered grief ; she grew not old.  
    God may have ended hell.”

“ But what of her ? ” My heart was wild,  
    And sickening for a sign.  
“ She bore,” he said, “ a seven months’ child —  
    Full big as he were nine.”  
My heart was wild and mazed my brain.  
    “ The child she bore was *mine*.” . . .

Bleak Windal moor in winter-time,  
    And dreary Windal mere ;  
But a bleaker and a drearier clime  
    Was in my bosom here.

“ Speak, mocking man, and tell me all !  
    I walk forbidden to see,  
Like one to his own funeral :  
    Tell me my misery.”

He breathed like one o’erweighed, o’erdone.  
    “ I have no gift to spare.  
I died long since, and so must shun  
    The genial human air.  
But this is truth — you are *my* son,  
    And I my brother’s heir.” . . .

I saw his eyes peer deep in mine  
    To search the heart he'd torn, —  
To thwart — too late — his love's design  
    That left a soul so lorn.  
O, bitterer than the bitter brine  
    To me was the May morn !

The world dropped from me, life and time ;  
    I fell down in a swoon.  
Beneath the burthen of a crime  
    I woke, with shame for boon.  
The earth I pressed showed at its prime  
    More empty than the moon.

Truth stood before me stripped of grace.  
    Such cruel sights men see !  
Life wore a flashless skull's grimace ;  
    Time hurt like mockery.  
God's heaven, without my mother's face,  
    Was barren all for me.

My mentor vanished into air, —  
    Wise parent of my pain ;  
Nor could I find him anywhere,  
    On upland or in plain.  
Green woods and fields again grew fair :  
But ah ! a deeper world was there  
    In sunshine and in rain.

Gone the wild selfish moods of youth,  
Proud loves that warp and cloy ;  
For I had felt the biting tooth  
Of life, and pain's alloy,  
Had come through wisdom and deep truth  
To know a gentler joy.

John Eden I, by God's good will,  
To whom some gifts are given  
To sweeten pleasure, lighten ill.  
Love mine to gently leaven  
Life, upon earth to softly spill  
Some mercy-drops of heaven.

## THE PALACE-BUILDERS

**B**EFORE me stood the wonderful Palace of Life ;  
And I heard the Builders at their work singing ;  
And the stars also sang in the bosom of God,  
And prophesied the advent of strange suns,  
And glories of worlds that are yet unborn ;  
So that I, wondering, in my lowly place  
Sang also, and was wholly unafraid.

With wisdom and wounds for his wages,  
In tune with the cosmic desire,  
Upclimbing the crests of the ages,  
Impelled by his soul as by fire,  
Man, fashioned for love and for laughter,  
For dole, and forbidden to despair,  
Doth build for a grandeur hereafter  
A Palace that's fair.  
From a mystical gleam and a story  
Engendered in time's procreant breast  
It grows, from the gloom to the glory  
As man is his cosmical quest,



From the dark to the light nobly faring,  
Strives upward, uncowed by his scars,  
With ardour invincible sharing  
The task of the stars.  
Erst hither crept dawn like disaster,  
Catastrophic, and pregnant with doom ;  
Day woke unto fear, and fled ; master  
Stood Chaos, and wailed in the gloom.  
Shrill Pillage and Arson flung flaring  
Wild hair with a shriek to the moon ;  
Mad Murder, with frenzy-gleam glaring,  
Laughed, boasting a boon ;  
Yet still 'mid the darkness and terror,  
Where the scream and the devil-laugh sprang,  
Clear-tongued 'mid Tartarian error  
The building blows rang  
On the Palace. Unseen, and apart stood  
The Power who had leavened the clay  
With a soul ; and on earth in his heart's good  
Man knelt him to pray  
In the dust to some jealous Negation —  
A deity stern in his cloud  
That wrung from his dim heart oblation,  
And scourged him with terrors, and bowed  
His will 'neath the force of his thunder —  
Till, spurning its bondage and ban,  
Rose regal in questioning wonder  
The Mind that was Man,  
And held not the dream in derision  
That splendidly came in his sleep,

But fixed on the brightness his vision  
That beckoned his soul from the deep,  
And followed, unfoiled. And the story  
Of the life that had soared from the sod  
Shone crowned when the cross held in glory  
The man that was God !

Then Truth rose and reigned in the ages,  
Her pain like a passion enticed ;  
And, rapt, with bare breast to time's rages  
Men died for their Christ !  
And the world stood athirst for His story,  
And the peoples implored Him for grace,  
And churches aspired to his glory,  
And they fashioned in haloes His face ;  
The mists of their incense hung round Him,  
They veiled Him with prayer and with praise ;  
With the crowns of their kings did they crown Him, —  
And put him apart from their days :  
They worshipped remote in their wonder ;  
They clouded His truth with their creeds ;  
They hailed Him with psalms and with thunder,  
And mocked Him with deeds !  
They decked with their stained gold His altars,  
They darkened His doors with their guile :  
But the God that ne'er panders nor palters  
Had vanished the while :—  
That the walls of His Palace might stay not  
He, Truth 'neath the truth that but seems,

Had turned from the hearts that could pray not  
And knew not their dreams.

The voice of the World-Soul is sounding,  
And time from a trance and a sleep  
Wakes! Height unto height is resounding,  
Deep answers to deep :  
“ Ye have left the pursuit for the plunder,  
And the sure for the shadows of things,  
And ye bow with the semblance of wonder  
To truths ye have shorn of their wings.  
The spirit hath fled from the token,  
And blown is the flower from the seed ;  
And the dreams ye have dreamed shall be broken  
For the dream rushes on to a deed  
Toward the height in a rapture of voices,  
Upborne by that windy Desire  
That fuses time's changes and choices  
And wings them with fire ! ”

From sloth and from canker we turn us,  
From truth grown too old to be true.  
Our faith in the future shall earn us  
A Truth that is lusty and new —  
A Truth 'fore which death is as laughter,  
A Conviction to bless and to buoy  
The soul as it seeks the hereafter  
On consummate joy !  
Hark ! Spirit, the stars lift their voices :  
Yon vast is no void but a voice !

The comos revolves and rejoices —  
Climb, build, and rejoice!  
Oh, false is the soul that would falter,  
And feeble the man that would pine  
With brow to some storm-shattered altar,  
With lips to some time-shrivelled shrine.  
The law that is life cannot favour,  
The deed that is strength cannot fail;  
And faiths they must wander and waver  
That Truth may prevail,  
Be called back like waves from the shingle  
To the wise deep, be fetterless, free —  
As streams that are summoned to mingle  
With cloud and with sea.  
A while in the gloom we may tarry,  
Yea, darkly at noon we may tread,—  
Through worlds that are shining we carry  
The shadows of worlds that are dead;  
Through vastness we go and we veer not,  
From vastness we come, and we hie  
To the vastness afar, and we fear not  
The doom of the days that shall die;  
We have gazed in the face of For-ever,  
And have sighted the infinite sea  
Where, on tides of eternal endeavour,  
Ebbs and flows the To-be!  
The Divine have we touched in the Human,  
From the depths have we risen and are wise:  
Again in the world walks the true Man  
With forehead flung proud to the skies;

He driveth the phantoms before him,  
And his soul from the spell of the past  
He hath wrung, and the star-worlds wheel o'er him  
With Aves at last !  
Proud heir to mortality's sorrows,  
A magnet for forces that mar,  
He mouldeth the marvellous morrows,  
His goal is afar !  
Rejoice in your work, O ye Builders !  
Rejoice like the morn in its might !  
Rejoice ! through the mist that bewilders  
Peals the Voice from the height  
That summons the brave to the glory,  
And the true to the infinite Truth, —  
From the feet of a Good that is hoary  
To the face of a God in His youth !

A Palace we build through the ages :  
'Tis the dream of Time's soul, the desire  
That burned in the bosoms of sages,  
Nor paled at the fang and the fire.  
'Twill soar till the planets swim under  
Its spires in the infinite height ;  
And the gates of it men shall call Wonder,  
And the walls of it time shall call Light.  
The while at its base we are building  
We dream of its mystical towers  
Where the pinnacles flash with the gilding  
Of hands that are holier than ours.



















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